HISTORY of the REFORMATION

3

of the SIXTEENTH CENTURY

JEAN HENRI MERLE-D'AUBIGNÉ

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REFORMATION

OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

BY J. H. MERLE D'AUBIGNÉ.

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FOREWORD

This edition has been reproduced by Light of the World Publication Company. This book intends to enlighten on the real controversies at stake, as reflected in unabated strife and multiple moral dilemmas. The account and illustrations are specially designed and incorporated to edify the reader on pertinent developments in the historical, scientific, philosophical, educational, religio-political, socio-economic, legal and spiritual spheres. Moreover, clear and undisputed patterns and correlations may be discerned wherein may be perceived the networking, interworking and overlapping of antithetical, yet harmonious schools of thought.

Earth's long trajectory of coercion, conflict and compromise has prepared the platform for the emergence of a New Age. Burning questions attend the advent of this anticipated new era, accompanied by its superstructures, systems of governance, rights-based regimes and ideals of freedom and happiness. Chequered in base deception, strategic repression and objectives of new world order, this e-book connects the dots between modern realities, spiritual mysteries and divine revelation. It traces the chronological progress from national catastrophe to global dominance, the destruction of an old system and the forging of a new; succinctly illuminating on love, human nature and even supernatural intervention.

Time and again, remarkable events have moulded the course of life and history, while even prefiguring the future. Living in times of great turbulence and uncertainty, the future has been but dimly comprehended. Thankfully, this work enables a panoramic vision of both past and future, highlighting critical moments of time which have unfolded in fulfilment to prophecy.

Although birthed in unpromising conditions, afflicted in gruelling crucibles, several individuals have resolved, persevered in virtue and sealed their faith, leaving an ineffaceable mark. Their contributions have shaped modernity and paved the road for a marvellous culmination and imminent change. Therefore, this literature serves as both inspiration and practical tool for a penetrative and profound understanding behind social issues, religion and politics. Each chapter narrates on both the world and the human condition, enshrouded in darkness, embattled in keen clashes, and impelled by sinister, hidden agendas and ulterior motives. Here, these are unashamedly exposed to plain view. Nevertheless, every page radiates with resplendent rays of courage, deliverance and hope.

Ultimately, it is our fervent desire that every reader experience, grow to love and accept truth. In a world permeated with lies, ambiguity and manipulation, truth will forever stand as the quintessential longing in the soul. Truth engenders life, beauty, wisdom and grace; resulting in renewed purpose, vigour and a genuine, yet personal transformation in perspective and life.

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BOOK IX—First Reforms. 1521 and 1522

CHAPTER 1

Progress of the Reformation—New Period—Usefulness of Luther's Captivity in the Wartburg—Agitation in Germany—Melancthon and Luther—Enthusiasm

For four years an old doctrine had been again proclaimed in the Church. The great tidings of salvation by grace, published in earlier times in Asia, Greece, and Italy, by Paul and his brethren, and after many ages re-discovered in the Bible by a monk of Wittenberg, had resounded from the plains of Saxony as far as Rome, Paris, and London; and the lofty mountains of Switzerland had re-echoed its powerful accents. The springs of truth, of liberty, and of life, had been re-opened to the human race. Thither had the nations hastened in crowds, and drunk gladly; but those who had there so eagerly quenched their thirst, were unchanged in appearance. All within was new, and yet everything without seemed to have remained the same.

The constitution of the Church, its ritual, its discipline, had undergone no change. In Saxony, and even at Wittenberg, wherever the new ideas had penetrated, the papal worship continued with its usual pomp; the priest before the altar, offering the host to God, appeared to effect an ineffable transubstantiation; monks and nuns entered the convents and took their eternal vows; the pastors of the flocks lived without families; religious brotherhoods met together; pilgrimages were undertaken; believers hung their votive offerings on the pillars of the chapels; and all the ceremonies, even to the most insignificant observances of the sanctuary, were celebrated as before. There was a new life in the world, but it had not yet created a new body. The language of the priest formed the most striking contrast with his actions. He might be heard thundering from the pulpit against the mass, as being an idolatrous worship; and then might be seen coming down to the altar, and scrupulously performing the pomps of this mystery. In every quarter the new Gospel sounded in the midst of the ancient rites.

The priest himself did not perceive this strange contradiction; and the people, who had admiringly listened to the bold language of the new preachers, devoutly practiced the old observances, as if they were never to lay them aside. Everything remained the same, at the domestic hearth and in social life, as in the house of God. There was a new faith in the world, but not new works. The sun of spring had shone forth, but winter still seemed to bind all nature; there were no flowers, no foliage, nothing outwardly that gave token of the change of season. But these appearances

were deceitful; a vigorous sap was circulating unperceived below the surface, and was about to change the aspect of the world.

It is perhaps to this prudent progress that the Reformation is indebted for its triumphs. Every revolution should be accomplished in the mind before it is carried out externally. The inconsistency we have noticed did not even strike Luther at first. It seemed to him quite natural that the people, who read his works with enthusiasm, should remain devoutly attached to the abuses which they assailed. One might almost fancy he had sketched his plan beforehand, and had resolved to change the mind before changing the forms. But this would be ascribing to him a wisdom the honour of which belongs to [310] a higher Intelligence. He carried out a plan that he had not himself conceived. At a later period he could recognise and discern these things: but he did not imagine them, and did not arrange them so. God led the way: it was Luther's duty to follow.

If Luther had begun by an external reform; if, as soon as he had spoken, he had attempted to abolish monastic vows, the mass, confession, and forms of worship, most assuredly he would have met with a vigorous resistance. Man requires time to accommodate himself to great revolutions. But Luther was by no means the violent, imprudent, daring innovator that some historians have described. The people, seeing no change in their customary devotions, fearlessly abandoned themselves to their new teacher. They were even surprised at the attacks directed against a man who still left them their mass, their beads, their confessor, and attributed them to the low jealously of obscure rivals, or to the cruel injustice of powerful adversaries. Yet Luther's opinions agitated their minds, renewed their hearts, and so undermined the ancient edifice that it soon fell of itself, without human agency. Ideas do not act instantaneously; they make their way in silence, like the waters that, filtering behind the rocks of the Alps, loosen them from the mountain on which they rest; suddenly the work done in secret reveals itself, and a single day is sufficient to lay bare the agency of many years, perhaps of many centuries.

A new era was beginning for the Reformation. Already truth was restored in its doctrine; now the doctrine is about to restore truth in all the forms of the Church and of society. The agitation is too great for men's minds to remain fixed and immovable at the point they have attained. Upon those dogmas, now so mightily shaken, were based customs that were already tottering to their fall, and which must disappear with them. There is too much courage and life in the new generation for it to continue silent before error. Sacraments, public worship, hierarchy, vows, constitution, domestic and public life,—all are about to be modified. The ship, slowly and laboriously constructed, is about to quit the docks and to be launched on the open sea.

We shall have to follow its progress through many shoals. The captivity of the Wartburg separates these two periods. Providence, which was making ready to give so great an impulse to the Reformation, had prepared its progress by leading into profound retirement the instrument destined to effect it. The work seemed for a time buried with the workman; but the seed must be laid in the earth, that it may bring forth fruit; and from this prison, which seemed to be the reformer's tomb, the Reformation was destined to go forth to new conquests, and to spread erelong over the whole world.

Hitherto the Reformation had been centred in the person of Luther. His appearance before the Diet of Worms was doubtless the sublimest day of his life. His character appeared at that time almost spotless; and it is this which has given rise to the observation, that if God, who concealed the reformer for ten months within the walls of the Wartburg, had that instant removed him for ever from the eyes of the world, his end would have been as an apotheosis. But God designs no apotheosis for his servant; and Luther was preserved to the Church, in order to teach, by his very faults, that the faith of Christians should be based on the Word of God alone. He was transported suddenly far from the stage on which the great revolution of the sixteenth century was taking place; the truth, that for four years he had so powerfully proclaimed, continued in his absence to act upon Christendom: and the work, of which he was but the feeble instrument, henceforward bore the seal not of man, but of God himself.

Germany was moved at Luther's captivity. The most contradictory rumours were circulated in the provinces. The reformer's absence excited men's minds more than his presence could have done. In one place it was said that friends from France had placed him in safety on the other bank of the Rhine; in another, that he had fallen by the dagger of the assassin. Even in the smallest villages inquiries were made about Luther; travellers were stopped and questioned; and groups collected in the public places. At times some unknown orator would recount in a spirit-stirring narrative how the doctor had been carried off; he described the cruel horsemen tying their prisoner's hands, spurring their horses, and dragging him after them on foot, until his strength was exhausted, stopping their ears to his cries, and forcing the blood from his limbs. "Luther's body," added he, "has been seen pierced through and through." As they heard this, the listeners uttered cries of sorrow. "Alas!" said they, "we shall never see or hear that noble-minded man again, whose voice stirred our very hearts!" Luther's friends trembled with indignation, and swore to avenge his death. Women, children, men of peace, and the aged, beheld with affright the prospect of new struggles.

Nothing could equal the alarm of the partisans of Rome. The priests and monks, who at first had not been able to conceal their exultation, thinking themselves secure of victory because one man was dead, [311] and who had raised their heads with an insulting air of triumph, would now have fled far from the threatening anger of the people. These men, who, while Luther was free, had given the reins to their fury, trembled now that he was a captive. Aleander, especially, was astounded. "The only remaining way of saving ourselves," wrote a Roman-catholic to the Archbishop of Mentz, "is to light torches and hunt for Luther through the whole world, to restore him to the nation that is calling for him." One might have said that the pale ghost of the reformer, dragging his chains, was spreading terror around, and calling for vengeance. "Luther's death," exclaimed some, "will cause torrents of blood to be shed."

In no place was there such commotion as in Worms itself; resolute murmurs were heard among both people and princes. Ulrich Hutten and Hermann Busch filled the country with their plaintive strains and songs of battle. Charles V and the nuncios were publicly accused. The nation took up the cause of the poor monk, who, by the strength of his faith, had become their leader.

At Wittenberg, his colleagues and friends, and especially Melancthon, were at first sunk in the deepest affliction. Luther had imparted to this young scholar the treasures of that holy theology which had from that time wholly occupied his mind. Luther had given substance and life to that purely intellectual cultivation which Melancthon had brought to Wittenberg. The depth of the reformer's teaching had struck the youthful Hellenist, and the doctor's courage in maintaining the rights of the everlasting Gospel against all human authority had filled him with enthusiasm. He had become a partner in his labours; he had taken up the pen, and with that purity of style which he derived from the study of the ancients, he had successively, and with a hand of power, lowered the authority of the fathers and councils before the sovereign Word of God.

Melancthon showed the same decision in his learning that Luther displayed in his actions. Never were there two men of greater diversity, and at the same time of greater unity. "Scripture," said Melancthon, "imparts to the soul a holy and marvellousdelight: it is the heavenly ambrosia."—"The Word of God," exclaimed Luther, "is a sword, a war, a destruction; it falls upon the children of Ephraim like a lioness in the forest." Thus, one saw in the Scriptures a power to console, and the other a violent opposition against the corruptions of the world. But both esteemed it the greatest thing on earth; and hence they agreed in perfect harmony. "Melancthon," said Luther, "is a wonder; all men confess it now. He is the most formidable enemy of Satan and the schoolmen, for he knows their foolishness, and Christ the rock. The

little Grecian surpasses me even in divinity; he will be as serviceable to you as many Luthers." And he added that he was ready to abandon any opinion of which Philip did not approve. On his part, too, Melancthon, filled with admiration at Luther's knowledge of Scripture, set him far above the fathers of the Church. He would make excuses for the jests with which Luther was reproached, and compared him to an earthen vessel that contains a precious treasure beneath its coarse exterior. "I should be very unwilling to reprove him inconsiderately for this matter," said Melancthon.

But now, these two hearts, so closely united, were separated. These two valiant soldiers can no longer march side by side to the deliverance of the Church. Luther has disappeared; perhaps he is lost forever. The consternation at Wittenberg was extreme: like that of an army, with gloomy and dejected looks, before the blood-stained body of the general who was leading them on to victory.

Suddenly more comforting news arrived. "Our beloved father lives," exclaimed Philip in the joy of his soul; "take courage and be firm." But it was not long before their dejection returned. Luther was alive, but in prison. The edict of Worms, with its terrible proscriptions, was circulated by thousands throughout the empire, and even among the mountains of the Tyrol. Would not the Reformation be crushed by the iron hand that was weighing upon it? Melancthon's gentle spirit was overwhelmed with sorrow.

But the influence of a mightier hand was felt above the hand of man; God himself deprived the formidable edict of all its strength. The German princes, who had always sought to diminish the power of Rome in the empire, trembled at the alliance between the emperor and the pope, and feared that it would terminate in the destruction of their liberty. Accordingly, while Charles in his journey through the Low Countries greeted with an ironical smile the burning piles which flatterers and fanatics kindled on the public places with Luther's works, these very writings were read in Germany with a continually increasing eagerness, and numerous pamphlets in favour of the reform were daily inflicting some new blow on the papacy.

The nuncios were distracted at seeing this edict, the fruit of so [312] many intrigues, producing so little effect. "The ink with which Charles V signed his arrest," said they bitterly, "is scarcely dry, and yet the imperial decree is everywhere torn in pieces." The people were becoming more and more attached to the admirable man who, heedless of the thunders of Charles and of the pope, had confessed his faith with the courage of a martyr. "He offered to retract," said they, "if he were refuted, and no one dared undertake his task. Does not this prove the truth of his doctrines?" Thus the first movement of alarm was succeeded in Wittenberg and the whole empire by a

movement of enthusiasm. Even the Archbishop of Mentz, witnessing this outburst of popular sympathy, dared not give the Cordeliers permission to preach against the reformer. The university, that seemed on the point of being crushed, raised its head. The new doctrines were too firmly established for them to be shaken by Luther's absence; and the halls of the academy could hardly contain the crowd of hearers.

CHAPTER 2

Luther in the Wartburg—Object of his Captivity—Anxiety—Sickness—Luther's Labours—On Confession—Reply to Latomus—His daily Walks

Meantime the Knight George, for by that name Luther was called in the Wartburg, lived solitary and unknown. "If you were to see me," wrote he to Melancthon, "you would take me for a soldier, and even you would hardly recognise me." Luther at first indulged in repose, enjoying a leisure which had not hitherto been allowed him. He wandered freely through the fortress, but could not go beyond the walls. All his wishes were attended to, and he had never been better treated. A crowd of thoughts filled his soul; but none had power to trouble him. By turns he looked down upon the forests that surrounded him, and raised his eyes towards heaven. "A strange prisoner am I," exclaimed he, "captive with and against my will!"

"Pray for me," wrote he to Spalatin; "your prayers are the only thing I need. I do not grieve for any thing that may be said of me in the world. At last I am at rest." This letter, as well as many others of the same period, is dated from the island of Patmos. Luther compared the Wartburg to that celebrated island to which the wrath of Domitian in former times had banished the Apostle John.

In the midst of the dark forests of Thuringia the reformer reposed from the violent struggles that had agitated his soul. There he studied christian truth, not for the purpose of contending, but as a means of regeneration and life. The beginning of the Reformation was of necessity polemical; new times required new labours. After cutting down the thorns and the thickets, it was requisite to sow the Word of God peaceably in the heart. If Luther had been incessantly called upon to fight fresh battles, he would not have accomplished a durable work in the Church. Thus by his captivity he escaped a danger which might possibly have ruined the Reformation,—that of always attacking and destroying without ever defending or building up.

This humble retreat had a still more precious result. Uplifted by his countrymen, as on a shield, he was on the verge of the abyss; the least giddiness might have plunged him into it headlong. Some of the first promoters of the Reformation both in Germany and Switzerland, ran upon the shoal of spiritual pride and fanaticism. Luther was a man very subject to the infirmities of our nature, and he was unable to escape altogether from these dangers. The hand of God, however, delivered him for a time, by suddenly removing him from the sphere of intoxicating ovations, and throwing him into an unknown retreat. There his soul was wrapt in pious meditation at God's footstool; it was again tempered in the waters of adversity; its sufferings and

humiliation compelled him to walk, for a time at least, with the humble; and the principles of a christian life were thenceforward evolved in his soul with greater energy and freedom.

Luther's calmness was not of long duration. Seated in loneliness on the ramparts of the Wartburg, he remained whole days lost in deep meditation. At one time the Church appeared before him, displaying all her wretchedness; at another, directing his eyes hopefully towards heaven, he could exclaim: "Wherefore, O Lord, hast thou made all men in vain?" (Psalm 89:48.) And then, giving way to despair, he cried with dejection: "Alas! there is no one in this latter day of his anger, to stand like a wall before the Lord, and save Israel!"

Then recurring to his own destiny, he feared lest he should be accused of deserting the field of battle; and this supposition weighed down his soul. "I would rather," said he, "be stretched on coals of fire, than lie here half-dead."

Transporting himself in imagination to Worms and Wittenberg, into the midst of his adversaries, he regretted having yielded to the advice of his friends, that he had quitted the world, and that he had not presented his bosom to the fury of men. "Alas!" said he, "there is nothing I desire more than to appear before my cruelest enemies." Gentler thoughts, however, brought a truce to such anxiety. Everything was not storm and tempest for Luther; from time to time his agitated mind found tranquillity and comfort. Next to the certainty of God's help, one thing consoled him in his sorrows; it was the recollection of Melancthon. "If I perish," wrote he, "the Gospel will lose nothing: you will succeed me as Elisha did Elijah, with a double portion of my spirit." But calling to mind Philip's timidity, he exclaimed with energy: "Minister of the Word! keep the walls and towers of Jerusalem, until you are struck down by the enemy. As yet we stand alone upon the field of battle; after me, they will aim their blows at you."

The thought of the final attack Rome was about to make on the infant Church, renewed his anxieties. The poor monk, solitary and a prisoner, had many a combat to fight alone. But a hope of deliverance speedily dawned upon him. It appeared to him that the assaults of the Papacy would raise the whole German nation, and that the victorious soldiers of the Gospel would surround the Wartburg and restore the prisoner to liberty. "If the pope," said he, "lays his hand on all those who are on my side, there will be a disturbance in Germany; the greater his haste to crush us, the sooner will come the end of the pope and his followers. And I shall be restored to you. God is awakening the hearts of many, and stirring up the nations. Only let our

enemies clasp our affair in their arms and try to stifle it; it will gather strength under their pressure, and come forth ten times more formidable."

But sickness brought him down from those high places on which his courage and his faith had placed him. He had already suffered much at Worms; his disease increased in solitude. He could not endure the food at the Wartburg, which was less course than that of his convent; they were compelled to give him the meager diet to which he had been accustomed. He passed whole nights without sleep. Anxieties of mind were superadded to the pains of the body. No great work is ever accomplished without suffering and martyrdom. Luther, alone upon his rock, endured in his strong frame a passion that the emancipation of the human race rendered necessary. "Seated by night in my chamber I uttered groans, like a woman in travail; torn, wounded, and bleeding" then breaking off his complaints, touched with the thought that his sufferings are a blessing from God, he exclaimed with love: "Thanks be to Thee, O Christ, that thou wilt not leave me without the precious marks of thy cross!" But soon, growing angry with himself, he cried out: "Madman and hard-hearted that I am! Woe is me! I pray seldom, I seldom wrestle with the Lord, I groan not for the Church of God! Instead of being fervent in spirit, my passions take fire; I live in idleness, in sleep, and indolence!" Then, not knowing to what he should attribute this state, and accustomed to expect everything from the affection of his brethren, he exclaimed in the desolation of his heart: "O my friends! do you then forget to pray for me, that God is thus far from me?"

Those who were around him, as well as his friends at Wittenberg and at the elector's court, were uneasy and alarmed at this state of suffering. They feared lest they should see the life they had rescued from the flames of the pope and the sword of Charles V decline sadly and expire. Was the Wartburg destined to be Luther's tomb? "I fear," said Melancthon, "that the grief he feels for the Church will cause his death. A fire has been kindled by him in Israel; if he dies, what hope will remain for us? Would to God, that at the cost of my own wretched life, I could retain in the world that soul which is its fairest ornament!—Oh! what a man!" exclaimed he, as if already standing on the side of his grave; "we never appreciated him rightly!"

What Luther denominated the shameful indolence of his prison was a task that almost exceeded the strength of one man. "I am here all the day," wrote he on the 14th of May, "in idleness and pleasures (alluding doubtless to the better diet that was provided him at first). I am reading the Bible in Hebrew and Greek; I am going to write a treatise in German on Auricular Confession; I shall continue the translation of the Psalms, and compose a volume of sermons, so soon as I have received what I

want from Wittenberg. I am writing without intermission." And yet this was but a part of his labours.

His enemies thought that, if he were not dead, at least they should hear no more of him; but their joy was not of long duration, and there could be no doubt that he was alive. A multitude of writings, composed in the Wartburg, succeeded each other rapidly, and the beloved voice of the reformer was everywhere hailed with enthusiasm. Luther published simultaneously works calculated to edify the Church, and polemical tracts which troubled the too eager exultation of his enemies. For nearly a whole year, he by turns instructed, exhorted, reproved, and thundered from his mountainretreat; and his amazed adversaries asked one another if there was not something supernatural, some mystery, in this prodigious activity. "He could never have taken any rest," says Cochloeus.

But there was no other mystery than the imprudence of the partisans of Rome. They hastened to take advantage of the edict of Worms, to strike a decisive blow at the Reformation; and Luther, condemned, under the ban of the empire, and a prisoner at Wartburg, undertook to defend the sound doctrine, as if he were still victorious and at liberty. It was especially at the tribunal of penance that the priests endeavoured to rivet the chains of their docile parishioners; and accordingly the confessional was the object of Luther's first attack. "They bring forward," said he, "these words of St. James: Confess your faults to one another. Singular confessor! his name is One Another. Whence it would follow that the confessors should also confess themselves to their penitents; that each Christian should be, in his turn, pope, bishop, priest; and that the pope himself should confess to all!"

Luther had scarcely finished this tract when he began another. A theologian of Louvain, by name Latomus, already notorious by his opposition to Reuchlin and Erasmus, had attacked the reformer's opinions. In twelve days Luther's refutation was ready, and it is a masterpiece. He clears himself of the reproach that he was wanting in moderation. "The moderation of the day," said he, "is to bend the knee before sacrilegious pontiffs, impious sophists, and to say to them: Gracious lord! Excellent master! Then, when you have so done, you may put anyone you please to death; you may even convulse the world, and you will be none the less a man of moderation Away with such moderation! I would rather be frank and deceive no one. The shell may be hard, but the kernel is soft and tender."

As Luther's health continued feeble, he thought of leaving the place of his confinement. But how could he manage it? To appear in public would be exposing his life. The back of the mountain on which the fortress stood was crossed by numerous

footways, bordered by tufts of strawberries. The heavy gate of the castle opened, and the prisoner ventured, not without fear, to gather some fruit. By degrees he grew bolder, and in his knight's garb began to wander through the surrounding country, attended by one of the guards of the castle, a worthy but somewhat churlish man. One day, having entered an inn, Luther threw aside his sword, which encumbered him, and hastily took up some books that lay there. His nature got the better of his prudence. His guardian trembled for fear this movement, so extraordinary in a soldier, should excite suspicions that the doctor was not really a knight. At another time the two comrades alighted at the convent of Reinhardsbrunn, where Luther had slept a few months before on his road to Worms. Suddenly one of the lay-brothers uttered a cry of surprise. Luther was recognised. His attendant perceived it, and dragged him hastily away; and already they were galloping far from the cloister before the astonished brother had recovered from his amazement.

The military life of the doctor had at intervals something about it truly theological. One day the nets were made ready—the gates of the fortress opened—the long-eared dogs rushed forth. Luther desired to taste the pleasures of the chase. The huntsmen soon grew animated; the dogs sprang forward, driving the game from the covers. In the midst of all this uproar, the Knight George stands motionless: his mind is occupied with serious thoughts; the objects around him fill his heart with sorrow. "Is not this," says he, "the image of the devil setting on his dogs—that is, the bishops, those representatives of Antichrist, and urging them in pursuit of poor souls?" A young hare was taken: delighted at the prospect of liberating it, he wrapped it carefully in his cloak, and set it down in the midst of a thicket; but hardly had he taken a few steps before the dogs scented the animal and killed it. Luther, attracted by the noise, uttered a groan of sorrow, and exclaimed: O pope! and thou, too, Satan! it is thus ye endeavour to destroy even those souls that have been saved from death!"

CHAPTER 3

Commencement of the Reform—Marriage of Feldkirchen—The Marriage of Monks—Theses—Tract against Monachism—Luther no longer a Monk

While the doctor of Wittenberg, thus dead to the world, was seeking relaxation in these sports in the neighbourhood of the Wartburg, the work was going on as if of itself: the Reform was beginning; it was no longer restricted to doctrine, it entered deeply into men's actions. Bernard Feldkirchen, pastor of Kemberg, the first under Luther's directions to attack the errors of Rome, was also the first to throw off the yoke of its institutions. He married.

The Germans are fond of social life and domestic joys; and hence, of all the papal ordinances, compulsory celibacy was that which produced the saddest consequences. This law, which had been first imposed on the heads of the clergy, had prevented the ecclesiastical fiefs from becoming hereditary. But when extended by Gregory VII to the inferior clergy, it was attended with the most deplorable results. Many priests had evaded the obligations imposed upon them by the most scandalous disorders, and had drawn contempt and hatred on the whole body; while those who had submitted to Hildebrand's law were inwardly exasperated against the Church, because, while conferring on its superior dignitaries so much power, wealth, and earthly enjoyment, it bound its humbler ministers, who were its most useful supporters, to a self-denial so contrary to the Gospel.

"Neither popes nor councils," said Feldkirchen and another pastor named Seidler, who had followed his example, "can impose any commandment on the Church that endangers body and soul. The obligation of keeping God's law compels me to violate the traditions of men." The re-establishment of marriage in the sixteenth century was a homage paid to the moral law. The ecclesiastical authority became alarmed, and immediately fulminated its decrees against these two priests. Seidler, who was in the territories of Duke George, was given up to his superiors, and died in prison. But the Elector Frederick refused to surrender Feldkirchen to the Archbishop of Magdeburg. "His highness," said Spalatin, "declines to act the part of a constable." Feldkirchen therefore continued pastor of his flock, although a husband and a father.

The first emotion of the reformer when he heard of this was to give way to exultation: "I admire this new bridegroom of Kemberg," said he, "who fears nothing, and hastens forward in the midst of the uproar." Luther was of opinion that priests ought to marry. But this question led to another,—marriage of monks; and here Luther had to support one of those internal struggles of which his whole life was

composed; for every reform must first be won by a spiritual struggle. Melancthon and Carlstadt, the one a layman, the other a priest, thought that the liberty of contracting the bonds of wedlock should be as free for the monks as for the priests. The monk Luther did not think so at first. One day the governor of the Wartburg having brought him Carlstadt's theses on celibacy: "Gracious God!" exclaimed he, "our Wittenbergers then will give wives even to the monks!" This thought surprised and confounded him; his heart was troubled. He rejected for himself the liberty that he claimed for others. "Ah!" said he indignantly, "they will not force me at least to take a wife." This expression is doubtless unknown to those who assert that Luther preached the Reformation that he might marry. Inquiring for truth, not with passion, but with uprightness of purpose, he maintained what seemed to him true, although contrary to the whole of his system. He walked in a mixture of error and truth, until error had fallen and truth remained alone.

There was, indeed, a great difference between the two questions. The marriage of priests was not the destruction of the priesthood; on the contrary, this of itself might restore to the secular clergy the respect of the people; but the marriage of monks was the downfall of monachism. It became a question, therefore, whether it was desirable to disband and break up that powerful army which the popes had under their orders. "Priests," wrote Luther to Melancthon, "are of divine appointment, and consequently are free as regards human commandments. But of their own free will the monks adopted celibacy; they are not therefore at liberty to withdraw from the yoke they voluntarily imposed on themselves."

The reformer was destined to advance, and carry by a fresh struggle this new position of the enemy. Already had he trodden under foot a host of Roman abuses, and even Rome herself; but monachism still remained standing. Monachism, that had once carried life into so many deserts, and which, passing through so many centuries, was now filling the cloisters with sloth and often with licentiousness, seemed to have embodied itself and gone to defend its rights in that castle of Thuringia, where the question of its life and death was discussed in the conscience of one man. Luther struggled with it: at one moment he was on the point of gaining the victory, at another he was nearly overcome.

At length, unable longer to maintain the contest, he flung himself [316] in prayer at the feet of Jesus Christ, exclaiming: "Teach us, deliver us, establish us, by Thy mercy, in the liberty that belongs to us; for of a surety we are thy people!"

He had not long to wait for deliverance; an important revolution was effected in the reformer's mind; and again it was the doctrine of justification by faith that gave

him victory. That arm which had overthrown the indulgences, the practices of Rome, and the pope himself, also wrought the downfall of the monks in Luther's mind and throughout Christendom. Luther saw that monachism was in violent opposition to the doctrine of salvation by grace, and that a monastic life was founded entirely on the pretended merits of man. Feeling convinced, from that hour, that Christ's glory was interested in this question, he heard a voice incessantly repeating in his conscience: "Monachism must fall!"—"So long as the doctrine of justification by faith remains pure and undefiled in the Church, no one can become a monk," said he. This conviction daily grew stronger in his heart, and about the beginning of September he sent "to the bishops and deacons of the Church of Wittenberg," the following theses, which were his declaration of war against a monastic life:—

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23). "Whosoever maketh a vow of virginity, chastity, of service to

God without faith, maketh an impious and idolatrous vow,—a vow to the devil himself.

"To make such vows is worse than the priests of Cybele or the vestals of the pagans; for the monks make their vows in the thought of being justified and saved by these vows; and what ought to be ascribed solely to the mercy of God, is thus attributed to meritorious works.

"We must utterly overthrow such convents, as being the abodes of the devil.

"There is but one order that is holy and makes man holy, and that is Christianity or faith.

"For convents to be useful they should be converted into schools, where children should be brought up to man's estate; instead of which they are houses where adult men become children, and remain so for ever."

We see that Luther would still have tolerated convents as places of education; but erelong his attacks against these establishments became more violent. The immorality and shameful practices that prevailed in the cloisters recurred forcibly to his thoughts. "I am resolved," wrote he to Spalatin on the 11th of November, "to deliver the young from the hellish fires of celibacy." He now wrote a book against monastic vows, which he dedicated to his father:—

"Do you desire," said he in his dedication to the old man at Mansfeldt, "do you still desire to rescue me from a monastic life? You have the right, for you are still my father, and I am still your son. But that is no longer necessary: God has been beforehand with you, and has Himself delivered me by his power. What matters it whether I wear or lay aside the tonsure and the cowl? Is it the cowl—is it the tonsure—that makes the monk? All things are yours, says St. Paul, and you are Christ's. I do not belong to the cowl, but the cowl to me. I am a monk, and yet not a monk; I am a new creature, not of the pope, but of Jesus Christ. Christ, alone and without any go-between, is my bishop, my abbot, my prior, my lord, my father, and my master; and I know no other. What matters it to me if the pope should condemn me and put me to death? He cannot call me from the grave and kill me a second time The great day is drawing near in which the kingdom of abominations shall be overthrown. Would to God that it were worth while for the pope to put us all to death! Our blood would cry out to heaven against him, and thus his condemnation would be hastened, and his end be near."

The transformation had already been effected in Luther himself; he was no longer a monk. It was not outward circumstances, or earthly passions, or carnal precipitation that had wrought this change. There had been a struggle: at first Luther had taken the side of monachism; but truth also had gone down into the lists, and monachism had fallen before it. The victories that passion gains are ephemeral; those of truth are lasting and decisive.

CHAPTER 4

Archbishop Albert—The Idol of Halle—Luther's Indignation—Alarm of the Court—Luther's Letter to the Archbishop—Albert's Reply—Joachim of Brandenburg

While Luther was thus preparing the way for one of the greatest revolutions that were destined to be effected in the Church, and the Reformation was beginning to enter powerfully into the lives of Christians, the Romish partisans, blind as those generally are who have long been in possession of power, imagined that, because Luther was in the Wartburg, The Reform was dead and forever extinct; and fancied they should be able quietly to resume their ancient practices, that had been for a moment disturbed by the monk of Wittenberg. Albert, elector-archbishop of Mentz, was one of those weak men who, all things being equal, decide for the truth; but who, as soon as their interest is put in the balance, are ready to take part with error. His most important aim was to have a court as brilliant as that of any prince in Germany, his equipages as rich, and his table as well furnished: the traffic in indulgences served admirable to obtain this result. Accordingly, the decree against Luther had scarcely issued from the imperial chancery, before Albert, who was then residing with his court at Halle, summoned the vendors of indulgences, who were still alarmed at the words of the reformer, and endeavoured to encourage them by such language as this: "Fear nothing, we have silenced him; let us begin to shear the flock in peace; the monk is a prisoner; he is confined by bolts and bars; this time he will be very clever if he comes again to disturb us in our affairs." The market was reopened, the merchandise was displayed for sale, and against the churches of Halle re-echoed with the speeches of the mountebanks.

But Luther was still alive, and his voice was powerful enough to pass beyond the walls and gratings behind which he had been hidden. Nothing could have roused his indignation to a higher pitch. What! the most violent battles have been fought; he has confronted every danger; the truth remained victorious, and yet they dare trample it under foot, as if it had been vanquished! That voice shall again be heard, which has once already put an end to this criminal traffic. "I shall enjoy no rest," wrote he to Spalatin, "until I have attacked the idol of Mentz with its brothel at Halle."

Luther set to work immediately; he cared little about the mystery with which some sought to envelop his residence in the Wartburg. He was like Elijah in the desert forging fresh thunderbolts against the impious Ahab. On the first of November he finished his treatise Against the New Idol of Halle.

Intelligence of Luther's plans reached the archbishop. Alarmed and in emotion at the very idea, he sent about the middle of October two of his attendants (Capito and Auerbach) to Wittenberg to avert the storm. "Luther must moderate his impetuosity," said they to Melancthon, who received them cordially. But Melancthon, although mild himself, was not one of those who imagine that wisdom consists in perpetual concession, tergiversation, and silence. "It is God who moves him," replied he, "and our age needs a bitter and pungent salt." Upon this Capito turned to Jonas, and endeavoured through him to act upon the court. The news of Luther's intention was already known there, and produced great amazement. "What!" said the courtiers: "rekindle the fire that we have had so much trouble to extinguish! Luther can only be saved by being forgotten, and yet he is rising up against the first prince in the empire!"—"I will not suffer Luther to write against the Archbishop of Mentz, and thus disturb the public tranquillity," said the elector.

Luther was annoyed when these words were repeated to him. Is it not enough to imprison his body, but they will also enchain his mind, and the truth with it? Do they fancy that he hides himself through fear, and that his retirement is an avowal of defeat? He maintains that it is a victory. Who dared stand up against him at Worms and oppose the truth? Accordingly when the captive in the Wartburg had read the chaplain's letter, informing him of the prince's sentiments, he flung it aside, determined to make no reply. But he could not long contain himself; he took up the epistle and wrote to Spalatin: "The elector will not suffer! and I too will not suffer the elector not to permit me to write Rather would I destroy yourself, the elector, nay, the whole world for ever! If I have resisted the pope, who is the creator of your cardinal, why should I give way before his creature? It is very fine, forsooth, to hear you allow the everlasting peace of God to be disturbed! Spalatin, it shall not be so! Prince, it shall not be so! I send you a book I had already prepared against the cardinal when I received your letter: Forward it to Melancthon."

Spalatin trembled as he read this manuscript; again he represented to the reformer how imprudent it would be to publish a work that would force the imperial government to lay aside its apparent ignorance of Luther's fate, and punish a prisoner who dared attack the greatest prince in the empire and the Church. If Luther persevered in his designs, the tranquillity would again be disturbed, and the Reformation perhaps be lost. Luther consented to delay the publication of his treatise; he even permitted Melancthon to erase the most violent passages. But, irritated at his friend's timidity, he wrote to the chaplain: "The Lord lives and reigns, that Lord in whom you court-folks do not believe, unless he so accommodate His works to your reason, that there is no longer any necessity to believe." He then resolved to write direct to the cardinal.

It is the whole body of Romish bishops that Luther thus brings to the bar in the person of the German primate. His words are those of a bold man, ardent in zeal for the truth, and who feels that he is speaking in the name of God himself.

"Your electoral highness," wrote he from the depth of the retreat in which he was hidden, "has set up again in Halle the idol that swallows the money and the souls of poor Christians. You think, perhaps, that I am disabled, and that the emperor will easily stifle the cries of the poor monk But know that I shall discharge the duties that christian charity has imposed upon me, without fearing the gates of hell, and much less the pope, his bishops, and cardinals. "For this reason my humble prayer is, that your electoral highness would remember the beginning of this affair—how a tiny spark kindled a terrible conflagration. All the world was at that time in a state of security. This poor begging friar (thought they), who unaided would attack the pope, is too weak for such an undertaking. But God interposed; and he caused the pope more labour and anxiety than he had ever felt since he had taken his place in the temple of God to tyrannise over the Church. This same God still lives: let none doubt it. He will know how to withstand a cardinal of Mentz, even were he supported by four emperors; for He is pleased above all things to hew down the lofty cedars and to abase the haughty Pharaohs.

"For this reason I inform your highness by letter, that if the idol is not thrown down, I must, in obedience to God's teaching, publicly attack your highness, as I have attacked the pope himself. Let your highness conduct yourself in accordance with this advice; I shall wait a fortnight for an early and favourable reply. Given in my wilderness, the Sunday after St. Catherine's day, (15th November) 1521.

"From your electoral highness's devoted and obedient servant, Martin Luther."

This letter was sent to Wittenberg, and from Wittenberg to Halle, where the cardinal-elector was then residing; for no one dared intercept it, foreseeing the storm that would be aroused by so daring an act. But Melancthon accompanied it by a letter addressed to the prudent Capito, in which he endeavoured to prepare the way for a favourable termination of this difficult business.

It is impossible to describe the feelings of the youthful and weak archbishop on receiving the reformer's letter. The work announced against the idol of Halle was like a sword suspended over his head. And, at the same time, what anger must have been kindled in his heart by the insolence of his peasant's son,—this excommunicated monk, who dared make use of such language to a prince of the house of Brandenburg,—the primate of the German Church? Capito besought the archbishop

to satisfy the monk. Alarm, pride, and the voice of conscience which he could not stifle, struggled fearfully in Albert's bosom. At last dread of the book, and perhaps remorse also, prevailed; he humbled himself: he put together all he thought calculated to appease the man of the Wartburg, and a fortnight had barely elapsed when Luther received the following letter, still more astonishing than his own terrible epistle:—

"My dear Doctor,—I have received and read your letter, and have taken it in good part. But I think the motive that has led you to write me such an epistle has long ceased to exist. I desire, with God's help, to conduct myself as a pious bishop and a christian prince, and I confess my need of the grace of God. I do not deny that I am a sinner, liable to sin and error, sinning and erring daily. I am well assured that without God's grace I am worthless and offensive mire, even as other men, if not more so. In replying to your letter, I would not conceal this gracious disposition; for I am more than desirous of showing you all kindness and favour, for love of Christ. I know how to receive a christian and fraternal rebuke. "With my own hand. Albert."

Such was the language addressed to the excommunicated monk of the Wartburg by the Elector-archbishop of Mentz and Magdeburg, commissioned to represent and maintain in Germany the constitution of the Church. Did Albert, is writing it, obey the generous impulses of his conscience, or his slavish fears? In the first case, it is a noble letter; in the second, it merits our contempt. We would rather suppose it originated in the better feelings of his heart. However that may be, it shows the immeasurable superiority of God's servants over all the great ones of the earth. While Luther alone, a prisoner and condemned, derived invincible courage from his faith, the archbishop, elector and cardinal, environed with all the power and favours of the world, trembled on his throne. This contrast appears continually, and is the key to the strange enigma offered by the history of the Reformation. The Christian is not called upon to count his forces, and to number his means of victory. The only thing he should be anxious about is to know whether the cause he upholds is really that of God, and whether he looks only to his Master's glory. Unquestionably he has an inquiry to make; but this is wholly spiritual,—the Christian looks at the heart, and not the arm; he weighs the justice of his cause, and not its outward strength. And when this question is once settled, his path is clear. He must move forward boldly, were it even against the world and all its armed hosts, in the unshaken conviction that God himself will fight for him.

The enemies of the Reformation thus passed from extreme severity to extreme weakness; they had already done the same at Worms; and these sudden transitions are of continual occurrence in the battle that error wages against truth. Every cause destined to fall is attacked with an internal uneasiness which makes it tottering and

uncertain, and drives it by turns from one pole to the other. Steadiness of purpose and energy are far better; they would thus perhaps precipitate its fall, but at least if it did fall it would fall with glory.

One of Albert's brothers, Joachim I, elector of Brandenburg, gave an example of that strength of character which is so rare, particularly in our own times. Immovable in his principles, firm in action, knowing how to resist when necessary the encroachments of the pope, he opposed an iron hand to the progress of the Reformation. At Worms he had insisted that Luther should not be heard, and that he ought to be punished as a heretic, in despite of his safe-conduct. Scarcely had the edict of Worms been issued, when he ordered that it should be strictly enforced throughout his states. Luther could appreciate so energetic a character, and making a distinction between Joachim and his other adversaries, he said: "We may still pray for the Elector of Brandenburg." The disposition of this prince seemed to have been communicated to his people. Berlin and Brandenburg long remained closed against the Reformation. But what is received slowly is held faithfully. While other countries, which then hailed the Gospel with joy,—Belgium for instance, and Westphalia,—were soon to abandon it, Brandenburg, the last of the German states to enter on the narrow way of faith, was destined in after-years to stand in the foremost ranks of the Reformation.

Luther did not read Cardinal Albert's letter without a suspicion that it was dictated by hypocrisy, and in accordance with the advice of Capito. He kept silence, however, being content with declaring to the latter, that so long as the archbishop, who was hardly capable of managing a small parish, did not lay aside his cardinal's mask and episcopal pomp, and become a simple minister of the Word, it was impossible that he could be in the way of salvation.

CHAPTER 5

Translation of the Bible—Wants of the Church—Principles of the Reformation—Temptations of the Devil—Luther's Works condemned by the Sorbonne—Melancthon's Reply—Luther Visits Wittenberg

While Luther was thus struggling against error, as if he were still in the midst of the battle, he was also labouring in his retirement of the Wartburg, as if he had no concern in what was going on in the world. The hour has come in which the Reformation, from being a mere theological question, was to become the life of the people; and yet the great engine by which this progress was to be effected was not yet in being. This powerful and mighty instrument, destined to hurl its thunderbolts from every side against the proud edifice of Rome, throw down its walls, cast off the enormous weight of the papacy under which the Church lay stifled, and communicate an impulse to the whole human race which would not be lost until the end of time,—this instrument was to go forth from the old castle of the Wartburg, and enter the world on the same day that terminated the reformer's captivity.

The farther the Church was removed from the time when Jesus, the true Light of the world, was on the earth, the greater was her need of the torch of God's Word, ordained to transmit the brightness of Jesus Christ to the men of the latter days. But this Divine Word was at that time hidden from the people. Several unsuccessful attempts at translation from the Vulgate had been made in 1477, 1490, and in 1518; they were almost unintelligible, and from their high price beyond the reach of the people. It had even been prohibited to give the German Church the Bible in the vulgar tongue. Besides which, the number of those who were able to read did not become considerable until there existed in the German language a book of lively and universal interest.

Luther was called to present his nation with the Scriptures of God. That same God who had conducted St. John to Patmos, there to write his revelation, had confined Luther in the Wartburg, there to translate His Word. This great task, which it would have been difficult for him to have undertaken in the midst of the cares and occupations of Wittenberg, was to establish the new building on the primitive rock, and, after the lapse of so many ages, lead Christians back from the subtleties of the schoolmen to the pure foundationhead of redemption and salvation.

The wants of the Church spoke loudly; they called for this great work; and Luther, by his own inward experience, was to be led to perform it. In truth, he discovered in faith that repose of the [320] souls which his agitated conscience and his monastic

ideas had long induced him to seek in his own merits and holiness. The doctrine of the Church, the scholastic theology, knew nothing of the consolations that proceed from faith; but the Scriptures proclaim them with great force, and there it was that he had found them. Faith in the Word of God had made him free. By it he felt emancipated from the dogmatical authority of the Church, from its hierarchy and traditions, from the opinions of the schoolmen, the power of prejudice, and from every human ordinance. Those strong and numerous bonds which for centuries had enchained and stifled Christendom, were snapped asunder, broken in pieces, and scattered round him; and he nobly raised his head freed from all authority except that of the Word. This independence of man, this submission to God, which he had learned in the Holy Scriptures, he desired to impart to the Church. But before he could communicate them, it was necessary to set before it the revelations of God. A powerful hand was wanted to unlock the massive gates of that arsenal of God's Word from which Luther had taken his arms, and to open to the people against the day of battle those vaults and antique halls which for many ages no foot had ever trod.

Luther had already translated several fragments of the Holy Scripture; the seven penitential Psalms had been his first task. John the Baptist, Christ himself, and the Reformation had begun alike by calling men to repentance. It is the principle of every regeneration in the individual man, and in the whole human race. These essays had been eagerly received; men longed to have more; and this voice of the people was considered by Luther as the voice of God himself. He resolved to reply to the call. He was a prisoner within those lofty walls; what of that! he will devote his leisure to translating the Word of God into the language of his countrymen. Erelong this Word will be seen descending from the Wartburg with him; circulating among the people of Germany, and putting them in possession of those spiritual treasures hitherto shut up within the hearts of a few pious men. "Would that this one book," exclaimed Luther, "were in every language, in every hand before the eyes, and in the ears and hearts of all men!" Admirable words, which, after a lapse of three centuries, as illustrious body, translating the Bible into the mother-tongue of every nation upon earth, has undertaken to realise "Scripture without any comment," said he again, "is the sun whence all teachers receive their light."

Such are the principles of Christianity and of the Reformation. According to these venerable words, we should not consult the Fathers to throw light upon Scripture, but Scripture to explain the Fathers. The reformers and the apostles set up the Word of God as the only light, as they exalt the sacrifice of Christ as the only righteousness with this perfect righteousness of Christ, we vitiate both the foundations of Christianity. These are the two fundamental heresies of Rome, and

which, although doubtless in a smaller degree, some teachers were desirous of introducing into the bosom of the Reformation.

Luther opened the Greek originals of the evangelists and apostles, and undertook the difficult task of making these divine teachers speak his mother tongue. Important crisis in the history of the Reformation! from that time the Reformation was no longer in the hands of the reformer. The Bible came forward; Luther withdrew. God appeared, and man disappeared. The reformer placed the Book in the hands of his contemporaries. Each one may now hear the voice of God for himself; as for Luther, henceforth he mingles with the crowd, and takes his station in the ranks of those who come to draw from the common fountain of light and life.

In translating the Holy Scriptures, Luther found that consolation and strength, of which he stood so much in need. Solitary, in ill health, and saddened by the exertions of his enemies and the extravagances of some of his followers,—seeing his life wearing away in the gloom of that old castle, he had occasionally to endure terrible struggles. In those times, men were inclined to carry into the visible world the conflicts that the soul sustains with its spiritual enemies; Luther's lively imagination easily embodied the emotions of his heart, and the superstitions of the Middle Ages had still some hold upon his mind, so that we might say of him, as it has been said of Calvin with regard to the punishment inflicted on heretics: there was yet a remnant of popery in him.

Satan was not in Luther's view simply an invisible though real being; he thought that this adversary of God appeared to men as he had appeared to Jesus Christ. Although the authenticity of many of the stories on this subject contained in the Table-talk and elsewhere is more than doubtful, history must still record this failing in the reformer. Never was he more assailed by these gloomy ideas than in the solitude of the Wartburg. In the days of his strength he had braved the devil at Worms; but now all the reformer's powers seemed broken and his glory tarnished. He was thrown aside; Satan was victorious in his turn, and in the anguish of his soul Luther imagined he saw his giant form standing before him, lifting his finger in threatening attitude, exulting with a bitter

and hellish sneer, and gnashing his teeth in fearful rage. One day especially, it is said, as Luther was engaged on his translation of the New Testament, he fancied he beheld Satan, filled with horror at his work, tormenting him, and prowling round him like a lion about to spring upon his prey. Luther, alarmed and incensed, snatched up his inkstand and flung it at the head of his enemy. The figure disappeared, and the missile was dashed in pieces against the wall. Luther's sojourn in the Wartburg

began to be insupportable to him. He felt indignant at the timidity of his protectors. Sometimes he would remain a whole day plunged in deep and silent meditation, and awakened from it only to exclaim, "Oh, that I were at Wittenberg!" At length he could hold out no longer; there has been caution enough; he must see his friends again, hear them, and converse with them. True, he runs the risk of falling into the hands of his enemies, but nothing can stop him. About the end of November, he secretly quitted the Wartburg, and set out for Wittenberg.

A fresh storm had just burst upon him. At last the Sorbonne had spoken out. That celebrated school of Paris, the first authority in the Church after the pope, the ancient and venerable source whence theological teaching had proceeded, had given its verdict against the Reformation.

The following are some of the propositions condemned by this learned body. Luther had said, "God ever pardons and remits sins gratuitously, and requires nothing of us in return, except that in future we should live according to righteousness." And he had added, "Of all deadly sins, this is the most deadly, namely, that anyone should think he is not guilty of a damnable and deadly sin before God." He had said in another place, "Burning heretics is contrary to the will of the Holy Ghost."

To these three propositions, and to many others besides, which they quoted, the theological faculty of Paris replied, "Heresy!—let him be accursed!"

But a young man, twenty-four years of age, of short stature, diffident, and plain in appearance, dared take up the gauntlet which the first college in the world had thrown down. They knew pretty well at Wittenberg what should be thought of these pompous censures; they knew that Rome had yielded to the suggestions of the Dominicans, and that the Sorbonne was led away by two or three fanatical doctors who were designated at Paris by satirical nicknames. Accordingly, in his Apology, Melancthon did not confine himself to defending Luther; but, with that boldness which characterizes his writings, he carried the war into the enemy's camp. "You say he is a Manichean!—he is a Montanist!—let fire and faggot repress his foolishness! And who is Montanist? Luther, who would have us believe in Holy Scripture alone, or you, who would have men believe in the opinions of their fellow-creatures rather than in the Word of God?"

To ascribe more importance to the word of a man than to the Word of God was in very truth the heresy of Montanus, as it still is that of the pope and of all those who set the hierarchical authority of the Church or the interior inspirations of mysticism

far above the positive declarations of the Sacred Writings. Accordingly the youthful masters of arts, who had said, "I would rather lay down my life than my faith," did not stop there. He accused the Sorbonne of having obscured the Gospel, extinguished faith, and substituted an empty philosophy in the place of Christianity. After this work of Melancthon's, the position of the dispute was changed; he proved unanswerably that the heresy was at Paris and Rome, and the catholic truth at Wittenberg.

Meanwhile Luther, caring little for the condemnations of the Sorbonne, was proceeding in his military equipment to the university. He was greatly distressed by various reports which reached him on the road of a spirit of impatience and independence that was showing itself among some of his adherents. At length he arrived at Wittenberg without being recognised, and stopped at Amsdorff's house. Immediately all his friends were secretly called together; and Melancthon among the first, who had so often said, "I would rather die than lose him." They came!—What a meeting!—what joy!—The captive of the Wartburg tasted in their society all the sweetness of christian friendship. He learnt the spread of the Reformation, the hopes of his brethren; and, delighted at what he saw and heard, offered up a prayer,—returned thanks to God,—and then with brief delay returned to the Wartburg.

CHAPTER 6

Fresh Reforms—Gabriel Zwilling on the Mass—The University—Melancthon's Propositions—The Elector—Monastic Institutions attacked—Emancipation of the Monks—Disturbances—Chapter of the Augustine Monks—Carlstadt and the Mass—First Celebration of the Lord's Supper—Importance of the Mass in the Romish System

Luther's joy was well founded. The work of the Reformation then made a great stride. Feldkirchen, always in the van, had led the assault; now the main body was in motion, and that power which carried the Reformation from the doctrine it had purified into the worship, life, and constitution of the Church, now manifested itself by a new explosion, more formidable to the papacy than even the first had been.

Rome, having got rid of the reformer, thought the heresy was at and end. But in a short time everything was changed. Death removed from the pontifical throne the man who had put Luther under the ban of the Church. Disturbances occurred in Spain, and compelled Charles to visit his kingdom beyond the Pyrenees. War broke out between this prince and Francis I, and as if that were not enough to occupy the emperor, Soliman made an incursion into Hungary, Charles, thus attacked on all sides, was forced to forget the monk of Worms and his religious innovations.

About the same time, the vessel of the Reformation, which, driven in every direction by contrary winds, was on the verge of foundering, righted itself, and floated proudly above the waters. It was in the convent of the Augustines at Wittenberg that the Reformation broke out. We ought not to feel surprise at this: it is true the reformer was there no longer; but no human power could drive out the spirit that had animated him.

For Sometime the Church in which Luther had so often preached re-echoed with strange doctrines. Gabriel Zwilling, a zealous monk and chaplain to the convent, was there energetically proclaiming the Reformation. As if Luther, whose name was at that time everywhere celebrated, had become too strong and too illustrious, God selected feeble and obscure men to begin the Reformation which that renowned doctor had prepared. "Jesus Christ," said the preacher, "instituted the sacrament of the altar in remembrance of his death, and not to make it an object of adoration. To worship it is a real idolatry. The priest who communicates alone commits a sin. No prior has the right to compel a monk to say mass alone. Let one, two, or three officiate, and let the others receive the Lord's sacrament under both kinds."

This is what Friar Gabriel required, and this daring language was listened to approvingly by the other brethren, and particularly by those who came from the Low Countries. They were disciples of the Gospel, and why should they not conform in everything to its commands? Had not Luther himself written to Melancthon in the month of August: "Henceforth and for ever I will say no more private masses?" Thus the monks, the soldiers of the hierarchy, emancipated by the Word, boldly took part against Rome.

At Wittenberg they met with a violent resistance from the prior. Calling to mind that all things should be done with order, they gave way, but with a declaration that to uphold the mass was to oppose the Gospel of God.

The prior had gained the day: one man had been stronger than them all. It might seem, therefore, that this movement of the Augustines was one of those caprices of insubordination so frequently occurring in monasteries. But it was in reality the Spirit of God itself which was then agitating all Christendom. A solitary cry, uttered in the bosom of a convent, found its echo in a thousand voices and that which men would have desired to confine within the walls of a cloister, went forth and took a bodily form in the very midst of the city.

Rumours of the dissensions among the friars soon spread through the town. The citizens and students of the university took part, some with, some against the mass. The elector's court was troubled. Frederick in surprise sent his chancellor Pontanus to Wittenberg with orders to reduce the monks to obedience, by putting them, if necessary, on bread and water; and on the 12th of October, at seven in the morning, a deputation from the professors, of which Melancthon formed a part, visited the convent, exhorting the brothers to attempt no innovations, or at least to wait a little longer. Upon this all their zeal revived: as they were unanimous in their faith, except the prior who combated them, they appealed to Scripture, to the understanding of believers, and to the conscience of the theologians; and two days after handed in a written declaration.

The doctors now examined the question more closely, and found that the monks had truth on their side. They had gone to convince, and were convinced themselves. What ought they to do? their consciences cried aloud; their anxiety kept increasing: at last, after long hesitation, they formed a courageous resolution.

On the 20th of October, the university made their report to the elector. "Let your electoral highness," said they, after setting forth the errors of the mass, "put an end

to every abuse, lest Christ in the day of judgment should rebuke us as he did the people of Capernaum."

This it is no longer a few obscure monks who are speaking; it is that university which for several years has been hailed by all the wise as the school of the nation; and the very means employed to check the Reformation are those which will now contribute to its extension.

Melancthon, with that boldness which he carried into learning, published fifty-five propositions calculated to enlighten men's minds.

Melancthon said, "Just as looking at a cross is not performing a good work, but simply contemplating a sign that reminds us of Christ's death;

"Just as looking at the sun is not performing a good work, but simply contemplating a sign that reminds us of Christ and of his Gospel;

"So, partaking of the Lord's Supper is not performing a good work, but simply making use of a sign that reminds us of the grace that has been given us through Christ.

"But here is the difference, namely, that the symbols invented by men simply remind us of what they signify; while the signs given us by God, not only remind us of the things themselves, but assure our hearts of the will of God.

"As the sight of a cross does not justify, so the mass does not justify.

"As the sight of a cross is not a sacrifice either for our sins or for the sins of others, so the mass is not a sacrifice.

"There is but one sacrifice,—but one satisfaction,—Jesus Christ.

Besides him, there is none.

"Let such bishops as do not oppose the impiety of the mass be accursed."

Thus spoke the pious and gentle Philip.

The elector was amazed. He had desired to reduce some young friars,—and now the whole university, Melancthon himself, rose in their defense. To wait seemed to

him in all things the surest means of success. He did not like sudden reforms, and desired that every opinion should make its way without obstruction. "Time alone," thought he, "clears up all things and brings them to maturity." And yet in spite of him the Reformation was advancing with haste steps, and threatened to carry everything along with it. Frederick made every exertion to arrest its progress. His authority, the influence of his character, the reasons thus appeared to him the most convincing, were all set in operation. "Do not be too hasty," said he to the theologians: "your number is too small to carry such a reform. If it is based upon the Gospel, others will discover it also, and you will put an end to the abuses with the aid of the whole Church. Talk, debate, preach on these matters as much as you like, but keep up with the ancient usages."

Such was the battle fought on the subject of the mass. The monks had bravely led the assault; the theologians, undecided for a moment, had soon come to their support. The prince and his ministers alone defended the place. It has been asserted that the Reformation was accomplished by the power and authority of the elector; but far from that, the assailants shrunk back at the sound of his voice, and the mass was saved for a few days.

The heat of the attack had been already directed against another point. Friar Gabriel still continued his heart-stirring sermons in the church of the Augustines. Monachism was now the object of his reiterated blows; if the mass was the stronghold of the Roman doctrines, the monastic orders were the support of her hierarchy. These, then, were the two first positions that must be carried.

"No one," said Gabriel, according to the prior's report, "no dweller in the convents keeps the commandments of God; no one can be saved under a cowl; every man that enters a cloister enters it in the name of the devil. The vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, are contrary to the Gospel."

This extraordinary language was reported to the prior, who avoided going to church for fear he should hear it.

"Gabriel," said they, "desires that every exertion should be made to empty the cloisters. He says if a monk is met in the streets, the people should pull him by the frock and laugh at him; and that if they cannot be driven out of the convents by ridicule, they should be expelled by force. Break open, pull down, utterly destroy the monasteries (says he), so that not a single trace of them may remain; and that not one of those stones that have contributed to shelter so much sloth and superstition may be found in the spot they so long occupied."

The friars were astonished; their consciences told them that Gabriel's words were but too true, that a monkish life was not in conformity with the will of God, and that no one could dispose of their persons better than themselves.

Thirteen Augustines quitted the convent together, and laying aside the costume of their order, assumed a lay dress. Those who possessed any learning attended the lectures of the university, in order one day to be serviceable to the Church; and those whose minds were uncultivated, endeavoured to gain a livelihood by the work of their own hands, according to the injunctions of the apostle, and the example of the good citizens of Wittenberg. One of them, who understood the business of a joiner, applied for the freedom of the city and resolved to take a wife.

If Luther's entry into the Augustine convent at Erfurth had been the germ of the Reformation, the departure of these thirteen monks from the convent of the Augustines at Wittenberg was the signal of its entering into possession of Christendom. For thirty years past Erasmus had been unveiling the uselessness, the folly, and the vices of the monks; and all Europe laughed and grew angry with him; but sarcasm was required no longer. Thirteen high-minded and bold men returned into the midst of the world, to render themselves profitable to society and fulfil the commandments of God. Feldkirchen's marriage had been the first defeat of the hierarchy; the emancipation of these thirteen Augustines was the second. Monachism, which had arisen at the time when the Church entered upon its period of enslavement and error, was destined to fall at the dawning of liberty and truth.

This daring step excited universal ferment in Wittenberg. Admiration was felt towards those men who thus came to take their part in the general labours, and they were received as brethren. At the same time a few outcries were heard against those who persisted in remaining lazily sheltered behind the walls of their monastery. The monks who remained faithful to their prior trembled in their cells; and the latter, carried away by the general movement, stopped the celebration of the low masses.

The smallest concession in so critical a moment of necessity precipitated the course of events. The prior's order created a great sensation in the town and university, and produced a sudden explosion. Among the students and citizens of Wittenberg were found some of those turbulent men whom the least excitement arouses and hurries into criminal disorders. They were exasperated at the idea of the low masses, which even the superstitious prior had suspended, still being said in the parish church; and on Tuesday the 3rd of December, as the mass was about to be read they ran up to the altars, took away the books, and drove the priests out of the chapel.

The council and university were annoyed, and met to punish the authors of these misdeeds. But the passions once aroused are not easily quelled. The Cordeliers had not taken part in this movement of the Augustines. On the following day, the students posted a threatening placard on the gates of their convent; after that forty students entered their church, and although they refrained from violence, they ridiculed the monks, so that the latter dared not say mass except in the choir. Towards evening the fathers were told to be upon their guard: "The students (it was said) are resolved to attack the monastery!" The frightened religioners, not knowing how to shelter themselves from these real or supposed attacks, hastily besought the council to protect them; a guard of soldiers was sent, but the enemy did not appear. The university caused the students who had taken part in these disturbances to be arrested. It was discovered that some were from Erfurth, where they had become notorious for their insubordination. The penalties of the university were inflicted upon them.

And yet the necessity was felt of inquiring carefully into the lawfulness of monastic vows. A Chapter of Augustine monks from Misnia and Thuringia assembled at Wittenberg in the month of December. They came to the same opinion as Luther. On the one hand they declared that monastic vows were not criminal, but on the other that they were not obligatory. "In Christ," said they, "there is neither layman nor monk; each one is at liberty to quit the monastery or to stay in it. Let him who goes forth beware lest he abuse his liberty; let him who remains obey his superiors, but through love." They next abolished mendicancy and the saying of masses for money; they also decreed that the best instructed among them should devote themselves to the teaching of the Word of God, and that the rest should support their brethren by the work of their own hands.

Thus the question of vows appeared settled; but that of the mass was undecided. The elector still resisted the torrent, and protected an institution which he saw standing in all Christendom. The orders of so indulgent a prince could not long restrain the public feeling. Carlstadt's head in particular was turning in the midst of the general ferment. Zealous, upright, and bold, ready, like Luther, to sacrifice everything for the truth, he was inferior to the reformer in wisdom and moderation; he was not entirely exempt from vain-glory, and with a disposition inclined to examine matters to the bottom, he was defective in judgment and in clearness of ideas. Luther had dragged him from the mire of scholasticism, and directed him to the study of Scripture; but Carlstadt had not acknowledged with his friend the all-sufficiency of the Word of God. Accordingly he was often seen adopting the most singular interpretations. So long as Luther was at his side, the superiority of the master kept the scholar within due bounds. But now Carlstadt was free. In the university, in the

church, everywhere in Wittenberg, this little dark-featured man, who had never excelled in eloquence, might be heard proclaiming with great fervour ideas that were sometimes profound, but often enthusiastic and exaggerated. "What madness," exclaimed he, "to think that one must leave the Reformation to God's working alone! A new order of things is beginning. The hand of man should interfere. Woe be to him who lags behind, and does not climb the breach in the cause of the Almighty."

The archdeacon's language communicated to others the impatience he felt himself. "All that the popes have ordained is impious," said certain upright and sincere men who followed his example. "Let us not become partakers in those abominations by allowing them to subsist any longer. What is condemned by the Word of God ought to be put down in the whole of Christendom, whatever may be the ordinances of men. If the heads of the State and of the Church will not do their duty, let us do ours. Let us renounce all negotiations, conferences, theses, and disputations, and let us apply the effectual remedy to so many evils. We need a second Elijah to throw down the altars of Baal."

The re-establishment of the Lord's Supper, in this moment of ferment and enthusiasm, unquestionably could not present the solemnity and holiness of its first institution by the Son of God, on the eve of his death, and almost at the foot of the cross. But if God now made use of weak and perhaps passionate men, it was nevertheless his hand that revived in the Church the feast of his love.

In the previous October, Carlstadt had already celebrated the Lord's Supper in private with twelve of his friends, in accordance with Christ's institution. On the Sunday before Christmas he gave out from the pulpit that on the day of our Lord's circumcision (the first day of the year) he would distribute the eucharist in both kinds (bread and wine) to all who presented themselves at the altar; that he would omit all useless forms, and in celebrating this mass would wear neither cope nor chasuble.

The affrighted council entreated the councillor Beyer to prevent such a flagrant irregularity; and upon this Carlstadt resolved not to wait until the appointed day. On Christmas day, 1521, he preached in the parish church on the necessity of quitting the mass and receiving the sacrament in both kinds. After the sermon he went to the altar; pronounced the words of consecration in German, and then turning towards the attentive people, said with a solemn voice: "Whosoever feels the burden of sins, and hungers and thirsts for the grace of God, let him come and receive the body and blood of our Lord." And then, without elevating the host, he distributed the bread and wine to all, saying: "This is the cup of my blood, and blood of the new and everlasting Covenant."

Antagonist sentiments prevailed in the assembly. Some, feeling that a new grace from God had been given to the Church, approached the altar in silence and emotion. Others, attracted chiefly by the novelty, drew nigh with a certain sense of agitation and impatience. Five communicants alone had presented themselves in the confessional: the rest simply took part in the public confession of sins. Carlstadt gave a public absolution to all, imposing for them no other penance than this: "Sin no more." Then, finished by singing the Agnus Dei. No one opposed Carlstadt; these reforms had already obtained general assent. The archdeacon administered the Lord's Supper again on New Year's day, and on the Sunday following, and from that time it was regularly celebrated. Einsidlen, one of the elector's councillors, having reproached Carlstadt with seeking his own glory rather than the salvation of his hearers: "Mighty lord," replied he, "there is no form of death that can make me withdraw from Scripture.

The Word has come upon me with such promptitude Woe be to me if I preach it not!" Shortly after, Carlstadt married.

In the month of January 1522, the council and university of Wittenberg regulated the celebration of the Lord's Supper according to the new ritual. They were, at the same time, engaged on the means of reviving the moral influence of religion; for the Reformation was destined to restore simultaneously faith, worship, and morality. It was decreed not to tolerate mendicants, whether they were begging friar or not; and that in every street there should be some pious man commissioned to take care of the poor, and summon open sinners before the university and the council.

Thus fell the mass—the principal bulwark of Rome; then the Reformation passed from simple teaching into public worship. For three centuries the mass and transubstantiation had been peremptorily established. From that period everything in the Church had taken a new direction; all things tended to the glory of man and the worship of the priest. The Holy Sacrament had been adored; festivals had been instituted in honour of the sublimest miracles; the adoration of Mary had acquired a high importance; the priest who, on his consecration, received the wonderful power of "making the body of Christ," had been separated from the laity, and had become, according to Thomas Aquinas, a mediator between God and man; celibacy had been proclaimed as an inviolable law; auricular confession had been entered upon the people, and the cup denied them; for how could humble laymen be placed in the same rank as priests invested with the most august ministry?

The mass was an insult to the Son of God: it was opposed to the perfect grace of His cross, and the spotless glory of His Everlasting kingdom. But if it lowered the

Saviour, it exalted the priest, whom it invested with the unparallelled power of reproducing in his hand, and at his will, the Sovereign Creator. From that time the Church seemed to exist not to preach the Gospel, but simply to reproduce Christ bodily. The Roman pontiff, whose humblest servants created at pleasure the body of God himself, sat as God in the temple of God, and claimed a spiritual treasure, from which he drew at will indulgences for the pardon of souls.

Such were the gross errors which, for three centuries, had been imposed on the Church in conjunction with the mass. When the Reformation abolished this institution of man, it abolished these abuses also. The step taken by the archdeacon of Wittenberg was therefore one of a very extended range. The splendid festivals that used to amuse the people, the worship of the Virgin, the pride of the priesthood, the authority of the pope—all tottered with the mass. The glory was withdrawn from the priests, to return to Jesus Christ, and the Reformation took an immense stride in advance.

CHAPTER 7

False Reform—The New Prophets—The Prophets at Wittenberg—Melancthon—The Elector—Luther—Carlstadt and the Images—Disturbances—Luther is called for—He does not hesitate—Dangers

Prejudiced men might have seen nothing in the work that was going on but the effects of an empty enthusiasm. The very facts were to prove the contrary, and demonstrate that there is a wide gulf between a Reformation based on the Word of God and a fanatical excitement.

Whenever a great religious ferment takes place in the Church, some impure elements always appear with the manifestations of truth. We see the rise of one or more false reforms proceeding from man, and which serve as a testimony or countersign to the real reform. Thus many false messiahs in the time of Christ testified that the real Messiah had appeared. The Reformation of the sixteenth century could not be accomplished without presenting a similar phenomenon. In the small town of Zwickau it was first manifested. In that place there lived a few men who, agitated by the great events that were then stirring all Christendom, aspired at direct revelations from the Deity, instead of meekly desiring sanctification of heart, and who asserted that they were called to complete the Reformation so feebly sketched out by Luther. "What is the use," said they, "of clinging so closely to the Bible? The Bible! always the Bible! Can the Bible preach to us? Is it sufficient for our instruction? If God had designed to instruct us by a book, would he not have sent us a Bible from heaven? It is by the Spirit alone that we can be enlightened. God himself speaks to us. God himself reveals to us what we should do, and what we should preach." Thus did these fanatics, like the adherents of Rome, attack the fundamental principle on which the entire Reformation is founded—the all-sufficiency of the Word of God.

A simple clothier, Nicholas Storch by name, announced that the angel Gabriel had appeared to him during the night, and that after communicating matters which he could not yet reveal, said to him: "Thou shalt sit on my throne." A former student of Wittenberg, one Mark Stubner, joined Storch, and immediately forsook his studies; for he had received direct from God (said he) the gift of interpreting the Holy Scriptures. Another weaver, Mark Thomas, added to their number; and a new adept, Thomas Munzer, a man of fanatical character, gave a regular organisation to this rising sect. Storch, desirous of following Christ's example, selected from among his followers twelve apostles and seventy-two disciples. All loudly declared, as a sect in

our days has done, that apostles and prophets were at length restored to the Church of God.

The new prophets, pretending to walk in the footsteps of those of old, began to proclaim their mission: "Woe! woe!" said they; "a Church governed by men so corrupt as the bishops cannot be the Church of Christ. The impious rulers of Christendom will be overthrown. In five, six, or seven years, a universal desolation will come upon the world. The Turk will seize upon Germany; all the priests will be put to death, even those who are married. No ungodly man, no sinner will remain alive; and after the earth has been purified by blood, God will then set up a kingdom; Storch will be put in possession of the supreme authority, and commit the government of the nations to the saints. Then there will be one only faith, one only baptism. The day of the Lord is at hand, and the end of the world draweth nigh. Woe! woe! woe!" Then declaring that infant baptism was valueless, the new prophets called upon all men to come and receive from their hands the true baptism, as a sign of their introduction into the new Church of God.

This language made a deep impression on the people. Many pious souls were stirred by the thought that prophets were again restored to the Church, and all those who were fond of the marvellous threw themselves into the arms of the extravagants of Zwickau. But scarcely had this old delusion, which had already appeared in the days of Montanism and in the Middle Ages found followers, when it met with a powerful antagonist of the Reformation. Nicholas Hausmann, of whom Luther gave this powerful testimony, "What we preach, he practices," was pastor of Zwickau. This good man did not allow himself to be misled by the pretensions of the false prophets. He checked the innovations that Storch and his followers desired to introduce, and his two deacons acted in unison with him. The fanatics, rejected by the ministers of the Church, fell into another extravagance. They formed meetings in which revolutionary doctrines were professed. The people were agitated, and disturbances broke out. A priest, carrying the host, was pelted with stones; the civil authority interfered, and cast the ringleaders into prison. Exasperated by this proceeding, and eager to vindicate themselves and to obtain redress, Storch, Mark Thomas, and Stubner repaired to Wittenberg.

They arrived there on the 27th of December 1521. Storch led the way with the gait and bearing of a trooper. Mark Thomas and Stubner followed him. The disorder then prevailing in Wittenberg was favourable to their designs. The youths of the academy and the citizens, already profoundly agitated and in a state of excitement, were a soil well fitted to receive these new prophets.

Thinking themselves sure of support, they immediately called on the professors of the university, in order to obtain their sanction. "We are sent by God to instruct the people," said they. "We have held familiar conversations with the Lord; we know what will happen; in a word, we are apostles and prophets, and appeal to Dr. Luther." This strange language astonished the professors.

"Who has commissioned you to preach?" asked Melancthon of his old pupil Stubner, whom he received into his house, "The Lord our God."—"Have you written any books?"—"The Lord our God has forbidden me to do so." Melancthon was agitated: he grew alarmed and astonished.

"There are, indeed, extraordinary spirits in these men," said he; "but what spirits? Luther alone can decide. On the one hand, let us beware of quenching the Spirit of God, and, on the other, of being led astray by the spirit of Satan."

Storch, being of a restless disposition, soon quitted Wittenberg. Stubner remained. Animated by an eager spirit of proselytism, he went through the city, speaking now to one, then to another; and many acknowledged him as a prophet from God. He addressed himself more particularly to a Swabian named Cellarius, a friend of Melancthon's, who kept a school in which he used to instruct a great number of young people, and who soon fully acknowledged the mission of the new prophets.

Melancthon now became still more perplexed and uneasy. It was not so much the visions of the Zwickau prophets that disturbed him, as their new doctrine on baptism. It seemed to him conformable with reason, and he thought that it was deserving examination; "for," said he, "we must neither admit nor reject any thing lightly."

Such is the spirit of the Reformation. Melancthon's hesitation and anxiety are a proof of the uprightness of his heart, more honourable to him, perhaps, than any systematic opposition would have been. The elector himself, whom Melancthon styled "the lamp of Israel," hesitated. Prophets and apostles in the electorate of Saxony as in Jerusalem of old! "This is a great matter," said he; "and as a layman, I cannot understand it. But rather than fight against God, I would take a staff in my hand, a descend from my throne."

At length he informed the professors, by his councillors, that they had sufficient trouble in hand at Wittenberg; that in all probability these pretensions of the Zwickau prophets were only a temptation of the devil; and that the wisest course, in his opinion, would be to let the matter drop of itself; nevertheless that, under all circumstances, whenever his highness should clearly perceive God's will, he would take counsel of

neither brother nor mother, and that he was ready to suffer everything in the cause of truth.

Luther in the Wartburg was appraised of the agitation prevailing [328] in the court and at Wittenberg. Strange men had appeared, and the source whence their mission proceeded was unknown. He saw immediately that God had permitted these afflicting events to humble his servants, and to excite them by trials to strive more earnestly after sanctification.

"Your electoral grace," wrote he to Frederick, "has for many years been collecting relics from every country. God has satisfied your desire, and has sent you, without cost of trouble, a whole cross, with nails, spears, and scourges Health and prosperity to the new relic! Only let your highness fearlessly stretch out your arm, and suffer the nails to enter your flesh! I always expected that Satan would send us this plague."

But at the same time nothing appeared to him more urgent than to secure for others the liberty that he claimed for himself. He had not two weights and two measures. "Beware of throwing them into prison," wrote he to Spalatin. "Let not the prince dip his hand in the blood of these new prophets." Luther went far beyond his age, and even beyond many other reformers, on the subject of religious liberty.

Circumstances were becoming every day more serious in Wittenberg.

Carlstadt rejected many of the doctrines of the new prophets, and particularly their sentiments on baptism; but here is a contagion in religious enthusiasm that a head like his could not easily resist. From the arrival of the men of Zwickau in Wittenberg, Carlstadt accelerated his movements in the direction of violent reforms. "We must fall upon every ungodly practice, and overthrow them all in a day," said he. He brought together all the passages of Scripture against images, and inveighed with increasing energy against the idolatry of Rome. "They fall down—they crawl before these idols," exclaimed he; "they burn tapers before them, and make them offerings Let us arise and tear them from the altars!"

These words were not uttered in vain before the people. They entered the churches, carried away the images, broke them in pieces, and burnt them. It would have been better to wait until their abolition had been legally proclaimed; but some thought that the caution of the chiefs would compromise the Reformation itself.

To judge by the language of these enthusiasts, there were no true Christians in Wittenberg save those who went not to confession, who attacked the priests, and who

ate meat on fast days. If anyone was suspected of not rejecting all the rites of the Church as an invention of the devil, he was set down as a worshipper of Baal. "We must form a Church," cried they, "composed of saints only!"

The citizens of Wittenberg laid before the council certain articles which it was forced to accept. Many of the articles were conformable to evangelical morals. They required more particularly that all houses of public amusement should be closed.

But Carlstadt soon went still farther: he began to despise learning; and the old professor was heard from his chair advising his pupils to return home, to take up the spade, to guide the plough, and quietly cultivate the earth, because man was to eat bread in the sweat of his brow. George Mohr, the master of the boys' school at Wittenberg, led away by the same fanaticism, called to the assembled citizens from the window of the schoolroom to come and take away their children. Why should they study, since Storch and Stubner had never been at the university, and yet they were prophets? A mechanic, therefore, was as good as all the doctors in the world; and perhaps better, to preach the Gospel.

Thus arose doctrines in direct opposition to the Reformation, which had been prepared by the revival of letters. It was with the weapon of theological learning that Luther had attacked Rome; and the enthusiasts of Wittenberg like the fanatical monks with whom Erasmus and Reuchlin had contended, presumed to trample all human learning under foot. If this vandalism succeeded in holding its ground, the hopes of the world were lost; and another eruption of barbarians would extinguish the light that God had kindled in Christendom.

The results of these strange discourses soon showed themselves. Men's minds were prejudiced, agitated, diverted from the Gospel; the university became disorganised; the demoralised students broke the bonds of discipline and dispersed; and the governments of Germany recalled their subjects. Thus the men who desired to reform and vivify everything, were on the point of ruining all. One struggle more (exclaimed the friends of Rome, who on all sides were regaining their confidence), one last struggle, and all will be ours!

Promptly to check the excesses of these fanatics was the only means of saving the Reformation. But who could do it? Melancthon? He was too young, too weak, too much agitated himself by these strange apparitions. The elector? He was the most pacific man of his age. To build castles at Altenburg, Weimar, Lochau, and Coburg; to adorn churches with the beautiful pictures of Lucas Cranach; to [329] improve the singing in the chapels; to advance the prosperity of his university; to promote the

happiness of his subjects; to stop in the midst of the children whom he met playing in the streets, and give them little presents:—such were the gentle occupations of his life. And now in his advanced age, would he contend with fanatics— would he oppose violence to violence? How could the good and pious Frederick make up his mind to this?

The disease continued to spread, and no one stood forward to check it. Luther was far from Wittenberg. Confusion and ruin had taken hold of the city. The Reformation had seen an enemy spring from its own bosom more formidable than popes and emperors. It was on the very verge of the abyss.

Luther! Luther! was the general and unanimous cry at Wittenberg. The citizens called for him earnestly; the professors desired his advice; the prophets themselves appealed to him. All entreated him to return.

We may imagine what was passing in the reformer's mind. All the terrors of Rome were nothing in comparison with what now wrung his heart. It is from the very midst of the Reformation that its enemies have gone forth. It is preying upon its own vitals; and that doctrine which alone brought peace to his troubled heart becomes the occasion of fatal disturbances to the Church.

"If I knew," he had once said, "that my doctrine injured one man, one single man, however lowly and obscure (which it cannot, for it is the Gospel itself), I would rather die ten times than not retract it." And now a whole city, and that city of Wittenberg, is falling into disorder! True, his doctrine has no share in this; but from every quarter of Germany voices are heard accusing him of it. Pains more keen than he had every felt before assail him now, and new temptations agitate him. "Can such then be the end of this great work of the Reformation?" said he to himself. Impossible!—he rejects these doubts. God has begun, God will perfect the work. "I creep in deep humility to the grace of the Lord," exclaimed he, "and beseech him that his name may remain attached to this work; and that if anything impure be mixed up with it, he will remember that I am a sinful man."

The news communicated to Luther of the inspiration of these new prophets, and of their sublime interviews with God did not stagger him one moment. He knew the depth, the anguish, the humiliation of the spiritual life: at Erfurth and Wittenberg he had made trial of the power of God, which did not so easily permit him to believe that God appeared to his creatures and conversed with them. "Ask these prophets," wrote he to Melancthon, "whether they have felt those spiritual torments, those creations of God, that death and hell which accompany a real regeneration And they

speak to you only of agreeable things, of tranquil impressions, of devotion and piety, as they say, do not believe them, although they should pretend to have been transported to the third heaven. Before Christ could attain his glory, he was compelled to suffer death; and in like manner the believer must go through the bitterness of sin before he can obtain peace. Do you desire to know the time, place, and manner in which God talks with men? Listen: as a lion so hath he broken all my bones: I am cast out from before his face, and my soul is abased even to the gates of hell No! The Divine Majesty (as they pretend) does not speak directly, so that men may see it; for no man can see my face and live."

But his firm conviction of the delusion under which the prophets were labouring, served but to augment Luther's grief. Has the great truth of salvation by grace so quickly lost its charms that men turn aside from it to follow fables? He begins to feel that the work is not so easy as he has thought at first. He stumbles at the first stone that the deceitfulness of the human heart had placed in his path; he is bowed down by grief and anxiety. He resolves, at the hazard of his life, to remove it out of the way of his people, and decides on returning to Wittenberg.

At that time he was threatened by imminent dangers. The enemies of the Reformation fancied themselves on the very eve of destroying it. George of Saxony, equally indisposed towards Rome and Wittenberg, had written, as early as the 16th of October 1521, to Duke John, the elector's brother, to draw him over to the side of the enemies of the Reformation. "Some," said he, "deny that the soul is immortal. Others (and these are monks!) attach bells to swine and set them to drag the relics of St. Anthony through the streets, and then throw them into the mire. All this is the fruit of Luther's teaching! Entreat your brother the elector either to punish the ungodly authors of these innovations, or at least publicly to declare his opinion of them. Our changing beard and hair remind us that we have reached the latter portion of our course, and urge us to put an end to such great evils."

After this George departed to take his seat in the imperial government at Nuremberg.

He had scarcely arrived when he made every exertion to urge it to adopt measures of severity. In effect, on the 21st of January, this body passed an edict, in which it complained bitterly that the priests said mass without being robed in their sacerdotal garments, consecrated the sacrament in German, administered it without having received the requisite confession from the communicants, placed it in the hands of laymen, and were not even careful to ascertain that those who stood forward to receive it were fasting.

Accordingly the imperial government desired the bishops to seek out and punish severely all the innovators within their respective dioceses. The latter hastened to comply with these orders.

Such was the moment selected by Luther for his reappearance on the stage. He saw the danger; he foreboded incalculable disasters. "Erelong," said he, "there will be a disturbance in the empire, carrying princes, magistrates, and bishops before it. The people have eyes: they will not, they cannot be led by force. All Germany will run blood. Let us stand up as a wall to preserve our nation in this dreadful day of God's anger."

CHAPTER 8

Departure from the Wartburg—New Position—Luther and Primitive Catholicism—Meeting at the Black Bear—Luther's Letter to the Elector—Return to Wittenberg—Sermon at Wittenberg—Charity—The Word—How the Reformation was brought about—Faith in Christ—Its Effects—Didymus—Carlstadt—The Prophets—Interview with Luther—End of the Struggle

Such were Luther's thoughts; but he beheld a still more imminent danger. At Wittenberg, the conflagration, far from dying away, became fiercer every day. From the heights of the Wartburg, Luther could perceive in the horizon the frightful gleams, the signal of devastation, shooting at intervals through the air. Is not he the only one who can give aid in this extremity? Shall he not throw himself into the midst of the flames to quench their fury? In vain his enemies prepare to strike the decisive blow; in vain the elector entreats him not to leave the Wartburg, and to prepare his justification against the next diet. He has a more important task to perform—to justify the Gospel itself. "More serious intelligence reaches me every day," wrote he. "I shall set out: circumstances positively require me to do so."

Accordingly, he rose on the 3rd of March with the determination of leaving the Wartburg for ever. He bade adieu to its time-worn towers and gloomy forests. He passed beyond those walls where the excommunications of Leo X and the sword of Charles V were unable to reach him. He descended the mountain. The world that lay at his feet, and in the midst of which he is about to appear again, would soon perhaps call loudly for his death. But it matters not! he goes forward rejoicing: for in the name of the Lord he is returning among his fellow-men.

Time had moved on. Luther was quitting the Wartburg for a cause very different from that for which he had entered it. He had gone thither as the assailant of the old tradition and of the ancient doctors; he left it as the defender of the doctrine of the apostles against new adversaries. He had entered it as an innovator, and as an impugner of the ancient hierarchy; he left it as a conservative and champion of the faith of Christians. Hitherto Luther had seen but one thing in his work,—the triumph of justification by faith; and with this weapon he had thrown down mighty superstitions. But if there was a time for destroying, there was also a time for building up. Beneath those ruins with which his strong arm had strewn the plain,—beneath those crumpled letters of indulgence, those broken tiaras and tattered cowls,—beneath so many Roman abuses and errors that lay in confusion upon the field of battle, he discerned and discovered the primitive Catholic Church, reappearing still the same, and coming forth as from a long period of trial, with its unchangeable

doctrines and heavenly accents. He could distinguish it from Rome, welcoming and embracing it with joy.

Luther effected nothing new in the world, as he has been falsely charged; he did not raise a building for the future that had no connection with the past; he uncovered, he opened to the light of day the ancient foundations, on which thorns and thistles had sprung up, and continuing the construction of the temple, he built simply on the foundations laid by the apostles. Luther perceived that the ancient and primitive Church of the apostles must, on the one hand, be restored in opposition to the Papacy, by which it had been so long oppressed; and on the other, he defended against enthusiasts and unbelievers, who pretended to disown it, and who, regardless of all that God had done in times past, were desirous of beginning an entirely new work. Luther was no longer exclusively the man of one doctrine,—that of justification,—although he always assigned it the highest place; he became the man of the whole Christian theology; and while he still believed that the Church was essentially the congregation of saints, he was careful not to despise the visible Church, and acknowledged the assembly of the elect as the kingdom of God. Thus was a great change effected, at this time, in Luther's heart, in his theology, and in the work of renovation that God was carrying on in the world. The Roman hierarchy might perhaps have driven the reformer to extremes; the sects which then so boldly raised their heads brought him back to the true path of moderation. The sojourn in the Wartburg divides the history of the Reformation into two periods.

Luther was riding slowly on the road to Wittenberg: it was already the second day of his journey, and Shrove Tuesday. Towards evening a terrible storm burst forth, and the roads were flooded. Two Swiss youths, who were travelling in the same direction as himself, were hastening onwards to find a shelter in the city of Jena. They had studied at Basle, and the celebrity of Wittenberg attracted them to that university. Travelling on foot, fatigued, and wet through, John Kessler of St. Gall and his companion quickened their steps. The city was all in commotion with the amusements of the carnival; balls, masquerades, and noisy feasting engrossed the people of Jena; and when the two travellers arrived, they could find no room at any of the inns. At last they were directed to Black Bear, outside the city gates. Dejected and harassed, they repaired thither slowly. The landlord received them kindly.

They took their seats near the open door of the public room, ashamed of the state in which the storm had placed them, and not daring to go in. At one of the tables sat a solitary man in a knight's dress, wearing a red cap on his head and breeches over which fell the skirts of his doublet; his right hand rested on the pommel of his sword, his left grasped the hilt; and before him lay an open book, which he appeared to be

reading with great attention. At the noise made by the entrance of these two young men, he raised his head, saluted them affably, and invited them to come and sit at his table; then presenting them with a glass of beer, and alluding to their accent, he said: "You are Swiss, I perceive; but from what canton?"—"From St. Gall."—"If you are going to Wittenberg, you will there meet with a fellowcountryman, Doctor Schurff."—Encouraged by this kind reception, they added: "Sir, could you inform us where Martin Luther is at present?"—"I know for certain," replied the knight, "that he is not at Wittenberg; but he will be there shortly. Philip Melancthon is there. Study Greek and Hebrew, that you may clearly understand the Holy Scriptures."—

"If God spare our lives," observed one of the young men, "we will not return home without having seen and heard Doctor Luther; for it is on his account that we have undertaken this long journey. We know that he desires to abolish the priesthood and the mass; and as our parents destined us to the priesthood from our infancy, we should like to know clearly on what grounds he rests his proposition." The knight was silent for a moment, and then resumed: "Where have you been studying hitherto?"—"At Basle."—"Is Erasmus of Rotterdam still there? what is he doing?" They replied to his questions, and there was another pause. The two Swiss knew not what to think. "Is it not strange," thought they, "that this knight talks to us of Schurff, Melancthon, and Erasmus, and on the necessity of learning Greek and Hebrew."—"My dear friends," said the unknown suddenly, "what do they think of Luther in Switzerland?"—"Sir," replied Kessler, "opinions are very divided about him there as everywhere else. Some cannot extol him enough; and others condemn him as an abominable heretic."—"Ha! the priests, no doubt," said the stranger.

The knight's cordiality had put the students at their ease. They longed to know what book he was reading at the moment of their arrival. The knight had closed it, and placed it by his side. At last Kessler's companion ventured to take it up. To the great astonishment of the two young men, it was the Hebrew Psalter! The student laid it down immediately, and as if to divert attention from the liberty he had taken, said: "I would willingly give one of my fingers to know that language."—"You will attain your wish," said the stranger, "if you will only take the trouble to learn it."

A few minutes after, Kessler heard the landlord calling him; the poor Swiss youth feared something had gone wrong; but the host whispered to him: "I perceive that you have a great desire to see and hear Luther; well! it is he who is seated beside you." Kessler took this for a joke, and said: "Mr. Landlord, you want to make a fool of me."—"It is he in very truth," replied the host; "but do not let him see that you know him." Kessler made no answer, but returned into the room and took his seat at the table, burning to repeat to his comrade what he had just heard. But how could he manage

it? At last he thought of leaning forward, as if he were looking towards the door, and then whispered into his friend's ear: "The landlord assures me that this man is Luther."—"Perhaps he said Hutten," replied his comrade; "you did not hear him distinctly."—"It may be so," returned Kessler; "the host said: It is Hutten; the two names are pretty much alike, and I mistook one for the other."

At that moment the noise of horses was heard before the inn; two merchants, who desired a lodging, entered the room; they took[332] off their spurs, laid down their cloaks, and one of them placed beside him on the table an unbound book, which soon attracted the knight's notice. "What book is that?" asked he.—"A commentary on some of the Gospels and Epistles by Doctor Luther," replied the merchant; "it is just published."—"I shall procure it shortly," said the knight.

At this moment the host came to announce that supper was ready. The two students, fearing the expense of such a meal in company with the knight Ulrich of Hutten and two wealthy merchants, took the landlord aside, and begged him to serve them with something apart. "Come along, my friends," replied the landlord of the Black Bear; "take your place at table beside this gentleman; I will charge you moderately."—"Come along," said the knight, "I will settle the score."

During this meal, the stranger knight uttered many simple and edifying remarks. The students and the merchants were all ears, and paid more attention to his words than to the dishes set before them. "Luther must either be an angel from heaven or a devil from hell," said one of the merchants in course of conversation; "I would readily give ten florins if I could meet Luther and confess to him."

When supper was over, the merchants left the table; the two Swiss remained alone with the knight, who, taking a large glass of beer, rose and said solemnly, after the manner of the country: "Swiss, one glass more for thanks." As Kessler was about to take the glass, the unknown set it down again, and offered him one filled with wine, saying: "You are not accustomed to beer."

He then arose, flung a military cloak over his shoulders, and extending his hand to the students, said to them: "When you reach Wittenberg, salute Doctor Schurff on my part."—"Most willingly," replied they; "but what name shall we give?"—"Tell him simply," added Luther, "He that is to come salutes you." With these words he quitted the room, leaving them full of admiration at his kindness and good nature.

Luther, for it was really he, continued his journey. It will be remembered that he had been laid under the ban of the empire; whoever met and recognised him, might

seize him. But at the time when he was engaged in an undertaking that exposed him to every risk, he was calm and serene, and conversed cheerfully with those whom he met on the road.

It was not that he deceived himself: he saw the future big with storms. "Satan," said he, "is enraged, and all around are plotting death and hell. Nevertheless, I go forward, and throw myself in the way of the emperor and of the pope, having no protector save God in heaven. Power has been given to all men to kill me wherever they find me. But Christ is the Lord of all; if it be his will that I be put to death, so be it!"

On that same day, Ash-Wednesday, Luther reached Borna, a small town near Leipsic. He felt it his duty to inform the prince of the bold step he was about to take; and accordingly alighted at the Guide Hotel and wrote the following letter:—

"Grace and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ!

"Most serene Elector, gracious Lord! The events that have taken place at Wittenberg, to the great reproach of the Gospel, have caused me such pain that if I were not confident of the truth of our cause, I should have given way to despair.

"Your highness knows this, or if not, be it known to you now, that I received the Gospel not from men but from heaven, through our Lord Jesus Christ. If I called for discussion, it was not because I had any doubts of the truth, but in humility, and in the hope to win over others. But since my humility is turned against the Gospel, my conscience compels me now to act otherwise. I have sufficiently given way to your highness by passing this year in retirement. The devil knows well that I did so not through fear. I should have entered Worms had there been as many devils in the city as tiles on the housetops. Now Duke George, with whom your highness frightens me, is yet much less to be feared than a single devil. If that which is passing at Wittenberg were taking place at Leipsic (the duke's residence), I would immediately mount my horse to go thither, although (may your highness pardon these words) for nine whole days together it were to rain nothing but Duke Georges, and each one nine times more furious than he is. What does he think of in attacking me? Does he take Christ my Lord for a man of straw? O Lord, be pleased to avert the terrible judgment which is impending over him!

"Be it known to your highness that I am going to Wittenberg under a protection far higher than that of princes and electors. I think not of soliciting your highness's support, and, far from desiring your protection, I would rather protect you myself. If

I knew that your highness could or would protect me, I would not go to Wittenberg at all. There is no sword than can further this cause. God alone must do everything without the help or concurrence of man. He who has the greatest faith is he who is most able to protect. But I observe that your highness is still weak in faith.

"But since your highness desires to know what you have to do, I will answer with all deference: your highness has already done too much, and ought to do nothing at all. God will not and cannot endure either your cares and labours or mine. Let your highness's conduct be guided by this.

"As for what concerns me, your highness must act as an elector; you must let the orders of his imperial majesty take their course in your towns and rural districts. You must offer no resistance if men desire to seize or kill me; for no one should resist dominions except He who has established them.

"Let your highness leave the gates open, and respect safe-conducts, if my enemies in person or their envoys come in search of me into your highness's states. Everything shall be done without trouble or danger to yourself.

"I have written this letter in haste, that you may not be made uneasy at hearing of my arrival. I have to do with a very different man from Duke George. He knows me well, and I know him pretty well.

"Given at Borna, at the inn of the Guide, this Ash-Wednesday 1522. "Your electoral highness's "Very humble servant, "Martin Luther."

It was thus Luther drew nigh to Wittenberg. He wrote to his prince, but not to excuse himself. An imperturbable confidence filled his heart. He saw the hand of God in this cause, and that was sufficient for him. The heroism of faith can never be carried farther. One of the editions of Luther's works has the following remark in the margin of this letter: "This is a wonderful writing of the third and last Elias!"

Luther re-entered Wittenberg of Friday the 7th March, having been five days on the way from Eisenach. Doctors, students, and citizens, all broke forth in rejoicings; for they had recovered the pilot who alone could extricate the vessel from the reefs among which it was entangled.

The elector, who was at Lockau with his court, felt great emotion as he read the reformer's letter. He was desirous of vindicating him before the diet: "Let him address me a letter," wrote the prince to Schurff, "explaining the motives of his return to

Wittenberg, and let him say also that he returned without my permission." Luther consented.

"I am ready to incur the displeasure of your highness and the anger of the whole world," wrote he to the prince. "Are not the Wittenbergers my sheep? Has God not intrusted them to me? And ought I not, if necessary, to expose myself to death for their sakes? Besides, I fear to see a terrible outbreak in Germany by which God will punish our nation. Let your highness be well assured and doubt not that the decrees of heaven are very different from those of Nuremberg." This letter was written on the very day of Luther's arrival at Wittenberg.

The following day, being the eve of the first Sunday in Lent, Luther visited Jerome Schurff. Melancthon, Jonas, Amsdorff, and Augustin Schurff, Jerome's brother, were there assembled. Luther eagerly questioned them, and they were informing him of all that had taken place, when two foreign students were announced, desiring to speak with Dr. Jerome. On entering this assembly of doctors, to two young men of St. Gall were at first abashed; but they soon recovered themselves on discovering the knight of the Black Bear among them. The latter immediately went up to them, greeted them as old acquaintances, and smiled as he pointed to one of the doctors: "This is Philip Melancthon, whom I mentioned to you." The two Swiss remained all day with the doctors of Wittenberg, in remembrance of the meeting at Jena.

One great thought absorbed the reformer's mind, and checked the joy he felt at meeting his friends once more. Unquestionably the character in which he was now to appear was obscure; he was about to raise his voice in a small town of Saxony, and yet his undertaking had all the importance of an event which was to influence the destinies of the world. Many nations and many ages were to feel its effects. It was a question whether that doctrine which he had derived from the Word of God, and which was ordained to exert so mighty an influence on the future development of the human race, would be stronger than the destructive principles that threatened its existence. It was a question whether it were possible to reform without destroying, and clear the way to new developments without annihilating the old. To silence fanatical men inspired by the energy of a first enthusiasm; to master an unbridled multitude, to calm it down, to lead it back to order, peace, and truth; to break the course of the impetuous torrent which threatened to overthrow the rising edifice of the Reformation, and to scatter it ruins far and wide:—such was the task for which Luther had returned to Wittenberg. But would his influence be sufficient for this? The event alone can show.

The reformer's heart shuddered at the thought of the struggle that awaited him. He raised his head as a lion provoked to fight shakes his long mane. "We must now trample Satan under foot, and contend against the angel of darkness," said he. "If our adversaries do not retire of their own accord, Christ will know how to compel them. We who trust in the Lord of life and of death are ourselves lords of life and of death."

But at the same time the impetuous reformer, as if constrained by a superior power, refused to employ the anathemas and thunders of the Word, and became an humble pastor, a gentle shepherd of souls. "It is with the Word that we must fight," said he; "by the Word must we overthrow and destroy what has been set up by violence. I will not make use of force against the superstitions and unbelieving. Let him who believeth draw nigh! let him who believeth not keep afar off! no one must be constrained. Liberty is the very essence of faith."

The next day was Sunday. On that day the doctor, whom for nearly a year the lofty ramparts of the Warburg have concealed from every eye, will reappear before the people in the pulpit of the church. It was rumoured in Wittenberg that Luther was come back, that he was going to preach. This news alone, passing from mouth to mouth, had already given a powerful diversion to the ideas by which the people were misled. They are going to see the hero of Worms. The people crowded together, and were affected by various emotions. On Sunday morning the church was filled with an attentive and excited crown.

Luther divines all the sentiments of his congregation; he goes up into the pulpit; there he stands in the presence of the flock that he had once led as a docile sheep, but which had broken from him like an untamed bull. His language was simple, noble, yet full of strength and gentleness: one might have supposed him to be a tender father returning to his children, inquiring into their conduct, and kindly telling them what report he had heard about them. He candidly acknowledged the progress they had made in faith; and by this means prepared and captivated their minds. He then continued in these words:—

"But we need something more than faith; we need charity. If a man who bears a sword in his hand be alone, it is of little consequence whether it be sheathed or not; but if he is in the midst of a crowd, he should act so as to wound nobody.

"What does a mother do to her infant? At first she gives it milk, then some very light food. If she were to begin by giving it meat and wine, what would be the consequence?

"So should we act towards our brethren. My friend, have you been long enough at the breast? It is well! but permit your brother to drink as long as yourself.

"Observe the sun! He dispenses two things, light and heat. There is no king so powerful as to bend aside his rays; they come straight to us; but heat is radiated and communicated in every direction. Thus faith, like light, should always be straight and inflexible; but charity, like heat, should radiate on every side, and bend to all the wants of our brethren."

Luther having thus prepared his hearers, began to press them more closely:

"The abolition of the mass, say you, is in conformity with Scripture: Agreed! But what order, what decency have you observed? It behoved you to offer up fervent prayers to the Lord, and apply to the public authority; then might every man have acknowledged that the thing was of God."

Thus spake Luther. This dauntless man, who at Worms had withstood the princes of the earth, produced a deep impression on the minds of his hearers by these words of wisdom and of peace. Carlstadt and the prophets of Zwickau, so great and powerful for a few weeks, and who had tyrannised over and agitated Wittenberg, had shrunk into pigmies beside the captive of Warburg.

"The mass," continued he, "is a bad thing; God is opposed to it; it ought to be abolished; and I would that throughout the whole world it were replaced by the Supper of the Gospel. But let no one be torn from it by force. We must leave the matter in God's hands. His Word must act, and not we. And why so, you will ask? Because I do not hold men's hearts in my hand, as the potter holds the clay. We have a right to speak; we have not the right to act. Let us preach: the rest belongs unto God. Were I to employ force, what should I gain? Grimace, formality, apelings, human ordinances, and hypocrisy But there would be no sincerity of heart, nor faith, nor charity. Where these three are wanting, all is wanting, and I would not give a pear-stalk for such a result.

"Our first object must be to win men's hearts; and for that purpose we must preach the Gospel. Today the Word will fall in one heart, tomorrow in another, and it will operate in such a manner that each one will withdraw from the mass and abandon it. God does more by his Word alone than you and I and all the world by our united strength. God lays hold upon the heart; and when the heart is taken, all is won.

"I do not say this for the restoration of the mass. Since it is down, in God's name there let it lie! But should you have gone to work as you did? Paul, arriving one day in the powerful city of Athens, found there altars raised to false gods. He went from one to the other, and observed them without touching one. But he walked peaceably to the middle of the market-place, and declared to the people that all their gods were idols. His language took possession of their hearts, and the idols fell without Paul's having touched them.

"I will preach, discuss, and write; but I will constrain none, for faith is a voluntary act. See what I have done! I stood up against the pope, indulgences, and papists, but without violence or tumult. I put forward God's Word; I preached and wrote—this was all I did. And yet while I was asleep, or seated familiarly at table with Amsdorff and Melancthon, drinking and gossiping over our Wittenberg beer, the Word that I had preached overthrew popery, so that neither prince nor emperor has done it so much harm. And yet I did nothing: the Word alone did all. If I had wished to appeal to force, the whole of Germany would perhaps have been deluged with blood. But what would have been the result? Ruin and desolation both to body and soul I therefore kept quiet, and left the Word to run through the world alone. Do you know what the devil thinks when he sees men resort to violence to propagate the Gospel through the world? Seated with folded arms behind the fire of hell, Satan says, with malignant looks and frightful grin: 'Ah! how wise these madmen are to play my game!' But when he sees the Word running and contending alone on the field of battle, then he is troubled, and his knees knock together; he shudders and faints with fear."

Luther went into the pulpit again on Tuesday; and his powerful voice resounded once more through the agitated crowd. He preached again on the five succeeding days. He took a review of the destruction of images, distinction of meats, the institution of the Lord's Supper, the restoration of the cup, the abolition of confession. He showed that these points were of far less importance than the mass, and that the originators of the disorders that had taken place in Wittenberg had grossly abused their liberty. He employed by turns the language of christian charity and bursts of holy indignation.

He inveighed more especially against those who partook thoughtlessly of Christ's Supper. "It is not the outward manducation that maketh a Christian," said he, "but the inward and spiritual eating that worketh by faith, and without which all forms are mere show and grimace. Now this faith consists in a firm belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; that having taken our sins and iniquities upon himself, and having borne them on the cross, he is himself their sole and almighty atonement; that he stands continually before God, that he reconcileth us with the Father, and that he hath given us the sacrament of his body to strengthen our faith in this unspeakable

mercy. If I believe in these things, God is my defender; with him, I brave sin, death, hell, and devils; they can do me no harm, nor disturb a single hair of my head. This spiritual bread is the consolation of the afflicted, health to the sick, life to the dying, food to the hungry, riches to the poor. He who does not groan under his sins must not approach that altar: what can he do there? Ah! let our conscience accuse us, let our hearts be rent in twain at the thought of our sins, and then we shall not so presumptuously approach the holy sacrament."

The crowd ceased not to fill the temple; people flocked from the neighbouring towns to hear the new Elijah. Among others, Capito spent two days at Wittenberg, and heard two of the doctor's sermons. Never had Luther and Cardinal Albert's chaplain been so well agreed. Melancthon, the magistrates, the professors, and all the inhabitants, were delighted. Schurff, charmed at the result of so gloomy an affair, hastened to communicate it to the elector. On Friday the 15th March, the day on which Luther delivered his sixth sermon, he wrote: "Oh, what joy has Dr. Martins's return diffused among us! His words, through Divine mercy, every day are bringing back our poor misguided people into the way of truth. It is clear as the sun that the Spirit of God is in him, and that by His special providence he returned to Wittenberg."

In truth, these sermons are models of popular eloquence, but not of that which in the times of Demosthenes, or even of Savonarola, fired men's hearts. The task of the Wittenberg orator was more difficult. It is easier to rouse the fury of a wild beast that to allay it. Luther had to soothe a fanaticized multitude, to tame its unbridled passions; and in this he succeeded. In his eight discourses, the reformer did not allow one offensive word to escape him against the originators of these disorders,—not one unpleasant allusion. But the greater his moderation, the greater also was his strength; the more caution he used towards these deluded men, the more powerful was his vindication of offended truth. How could the people of Wittenberg resist his powerful eloquence? Men usually ascribe to timidity, fear, and compromise, those speeches that advocate moderation. Here there was nothing of the sort. Luther appeared before the inhabitants of Wittenberg, braving the excommunication of the pope and the proscription of the emperor. He had returned in despite of the prohibition of the elector, who had declared his inability to defend him. Even at Worms, Luther had not shown so much courage. He confronted the most imminent dangers; and accordingly his words were not disregarded: the man who braved the scaffold had a right to exhort to submission. That man may boldly speak of obedience to God, who, to do so, defies all the persecution of man. At Luther's voice all objections vanished, the tumult subsided, seditious cries were heard no longer, and the citizens of Wittenberg returned quietly to their dwellings.

Gabriel Didymus, who had shown himself the most enthusiastic of all the Augustine Friars, did not lose one of the reformer's words. "Do you not think Luther a wonderful teacher?" asked a hearer in great emotion. "Ah!" replied he, "I seem to listen to the voice, not of a man, but of an angel." Erelong Didymus openly acknowledged that he had been deceived. "He is quite another man," said Luther.

It was not so at first with Carlstadt. Despising learning, pretending to frequent the workshops of the Wittenberg mechanics to receive understanding of the Holy Scriptures, he was mortified at seeing his work crumble away at Luther's appearance. In his eyes this was checking the reform itself. Hence his air was always dejected, gloomy, and dissatisfied. Yet he sacrificed his self-love for the sake of peace; he restrained his desires of vengeance, and became reconciled, outwardly at least, with his colleague, and shortly after resumed his lectures in the university.

The chief prophets were not at Wittenberg when Luther returned. Nicholas Storch was wandering through the country; Mark Stubner had quitted Melancthon's hospitable roof. Perhaps their prophetic spirit had disappeared, and they had had neither voice nor answer, so soon as they learnt that Elijah was directing his steps towards this new Carmel. The old schoolmaster Cellarius alone had remained. Stubner, however, being informed that the sheep of his fold were scattered, hastily returned. Those who were still faithful to "the heavenly prophecy" gathered round their master, reported Luther's speeches to him, and asked him anxiously what they were to think and do. Stubner exhorted them to remain firm in their faith. "Let him appear," cried Cellarius, "let him grant us a conference,—let him only permit us to set forth our doctrine, and then we shall see."

Luther cared little to meet such men as these; he know them to be of violent, impatient, and haughty disposition, who could not endure even kind admonition, and who required that everyone should submit at the first word, as to a supreme authority. Such are the enthusiasts in every age. And yet, as they desired an interview, the doctor could not refuse it. Besides, it might be of use to the weak ones of the flock were he to unmask the imposture of the prophets. The conference took place. Stubner opened the proceedings, explaining in what manner he desired to regenerate the Church and transform the world. Luther listened to him with great calmness. "Nothing that you have advanced," replied he at last gravely, "is based upon Holy Scripture.—It is all a mere fable."

At these words Cellarius could contain himself no longer; he raised his voice, gesticulated like a madman, stamped, and struck the table with his fist, and exclaimed, in a passion, that it was an insult to speak thus to a man of God. Upon

this Luther observed: "St. Paul declares that the proofs of apostleship were made known by miracles; prove yours in like manner."—"We will do so," answered the prophets. "The God whom I worship," said Luther, "will know how to bridle your gods." Stubner, who had preserved his tranquillity, then fixed his eyes on the reformer, and said to him with an air of inspiration, "Martin Luther! I will declare what is now passing in thy soul Thou art beginning to believe that my doctrine is true." Luther, after a brief pause, exclaimed: "God chastise thee, Satan!" At these words all the prophets were as if distracted. "The Spirit, the Spirit!" cried they. Luther, adopting that cool tone of contempt and cutting and homely language so familiar to him, said, "I slap your spirit on the snout." Their clamours now increased; Cellarius, in particular, distinguished himself by his violence. He foamed and trembled with anger. They could not hear one another in the room where they met in conference. At length the three prophets abandoned the field and left Wittenberg the same day.

Thus had Luther accomplished the work for which he had left his retreat. He had made a stand against fanaticism, and expelled from the bosom of the renovated Church the enthusiasm and disorder by which it had been invaded. If with one hand the Reformation threw down the dusty decretals of Rome, with the other it rejected the assumptions of the mystics, and established, on the ground it had won, the living and unchangeable Word of God. The character of the Reformation was thus firmly settled. It was destined to walk for every between these two extremes, equally remote from the convulsions of the fanatics and the death-like torpor of the papacy. A whole population excited, deluded, and unrestrained, had at once become tranquil, calm, and submissive; and the most perfect quiet again reigned in that city which a few days before had been like the troubled sea. Perfect liberty was immediately established at Wittenberg. Luther still continued to reside in the convent and wear his monastic dress; but every one was free to do otherwise. In communicating at the Lord's table, a general absolution was sufficient, or a particular one might be obtained. It was laid down as a principle to reject nothing but what was opposed to a clear and formal declaration of Holy Scripture. This was not indifference; on the contrary, religion was thus restored to what constitutes its very essence; the sentiment of religion withdrew from the accessory forms in which it had well nigh perished, and transferred itself to its true basis. Thus the Reformation was saved, and its teaching enabled to continue its development in the bosom of the Church in charity and truth.

CHAPTER 9

Translation of the New Testament—Faith and Scripture—Opposition—Importance of this Publication—Necessity for a systematic Arrangement—Melancthon's Loci Communes—Original Sin—Salvation—Free Will—Effects of the Loci Communes

Tranquility was hardly established when the reformer turned to his dear Melancthon, and demanded his assistance in the final revision of the New Testament which he had brought with him from the Wartburg. As early as the year 1519 Melancthon had laid down the grand principle, that the Fathers must be explained according to Scripture, and not Scripture according to the Fathers. Meditating more profoundly every day on the books of the New Testament, he felt at once charmed by their simplicity and impressed by their depth. "There alone can we find the true food of the soul," boldly asserted this man so familiar with all the philosophy of the ancients. Accordingly he readily complied with Luther's invitation; and from that time the two friends passed many long hours together studying and translating the inspired Word. Often would they pause in their laborious researches to give way to their admiration. Luther said one day, "Reason thinks, Oh! if I could once hear God speak! I would run from one end of the world to the other to hear him Listen then, my brother man! God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, speaks to thee."

The printing of the New Testament was carried on with unexampled zeal. One would have said that the very workmen felt the importance of the task in which they were engaged. Three presses were employed in this labour, and ten thousand sheets, says Luther, were printed daily. At length, on the 21st September 1522, appeared the complete edition of three thousand copies, in two folio volumes, with this simple title: The New Testament—German—Wittenberg. It bore no name of man. Every German might henceforward procure the Word of God at a moderate price.

The new translation, written in the very tone of the holy writings, in a language yet in its youthful vigor, and which for the first time displayed its great beauties, interested, charmed, and moved the lowest as well as the highest ranks. It was a national work; the book of the people; nay more—it was in very truth the Book of God. Even opponents could not refuse their approbation to this wonderful work, and some indiscreet friends of the reformer, impressed by the beauty of the translation, imagined they could recognise in it a second inspiration. This version served more than all Luther's writings to the spread of christian piety. The work of the sixteenth century was thus placed on a foundation where nothing could shake it. The Bible, given to the people, recalled the mind of man, which had been wandering for ages in

the tortuous labyrinth of scholasticism, to the Divine fountain of salvation. Accordingly the success of this work was prodigious. In a short time every copy was sold. A second edition appeared in the month of December; and in 1533 seventeen editions had been printed at Wittenberg, thirteen at Augsburg, twelve at Basle, one at Erfurth, one at Grimma, one at Leipsic, and thirteen at Strasburg. Such were the powerful levers that uplifted and transformed the Church and the world.

While the first edition of the New Testament was going through the press, Luther undertook a translation of the Old. This labour, begun in 1522, was continued without interruption. He published this translation in parts as they were finished, the more speedily to gratify public impatience, and to enable the poor to procure the book.

From Scripture and faith, two sources which in reality are but one, the life of the Gospel has flowed, and is still spreading over the world. These two principles combated two fundamental errors. Faith was opposed to the Pelagian tendency of Roman Catholicism; Scripture, to the theory of tradition and the authority of Rome. Scripture led man to faith, and faith led him back to Scripture. "Man can do no meritorious work; the free grace of God, which he receives by faith in Christ, alone saves him." Such was the doctrine proclaimed in Christendom. But this doctrine could not fail to impel Christendom to the study of Scripture.

In truth, if faith in Christ is everything in Christianity, if the practices and ordinances of the Church are nothing, it is not to the teaching of the Church that we should adhere, but to the teaching of Christ. The bond that unites to Christ will become everything to the believer. What matters to him the outward link that connects him with an outward church enslaved by the opinions of men? Thus, as the doctrine of the Bible had impelled Luther's contemporaries towards Jesus Christ, so in turn the love they felt to Jesus Christ impelled them to the Bible. It was not, as has been supposed in our days, from a philosophical principle, or in consequence of doubt, or from the necessity of inquiry, that they returned to Scripture; it was because they there found the Word of Him they loved. "You have preached Christ to us," said they to the reformer, "let us now hear him himself." And they seized the pages that were spread before them, as a letter coming from heaven.

But if the Bible was thus gladly received by those who loved Christ, it was scornfully rejected by those who preferred the traditions and observances of men. A violent persecution was waged against this work of the reformer's. At the news of Luther's publication, Rome trembled. The pen which had transcribed the sacred oracles was really that which Frederick had seen in his dream, and which, reaching

to the Seven Hills, had shaken the tiara of the papacy. The monk in his cell, the prince on his throne, uttered a cry of anger. Ignorant priests shuddered at the thought that every citizen, nay every peasant, would now be able to dispute with them on the precepts of our Lord. The King of England denounced the work to the Elector Frederick and to Duke George of Saxony. But as early as the month of November the duke had ordered his subjects to deposit every copy of Luther's New Testament in the hands of the magistrates. Bavaria, Brandenburg, Austria, and all the states devoted to Rome, published similar decrees. In some places they made sacrilegious bonfires of these sacred books in the public places. Thus did Rome in the sixteenth century renew the efforts by which paganism had attempted to destroy the religion of Jesus Christ, at the moment when the dominion was escaping from the priests and their idols. But who can check the triumphant progress of the Gospel? "Even after my prohibition," wrote Duke George, "many thousand copies were sold and read in my states."

God even made use of those hands to circulate his Word that were endeavouring to destroy it. The Romanist theologians, seeing that they could not prohibit the reformer's work, published a translation of the New Testament. It was Luther's version, altered here and there by the publishers. There was no hindrance to its being read. Rome as yet knew not that wherever the Word of God is established, there her power is shaken. Joachim of Brandenburg permitted all his subjects to read any translation of the Bible, in Latin or in German, provided it did not come from Wittenberg. The people of Germany, and those of Brandenburg in particular, thus made great progress in the knowledge of the truth.

The publication of the New Testament in the vulgar tongue is an important epoch in the Reformation. If Feldkirchen's marriage was the first step in the progress of the Reformation from doctrine into social life; if the abolition of monastic vows was the second; if the re-establishment of the Lord's Supper was the third,—the publication of the New Testament was perhaps the most important of all. It worked an entire change in society: not only in the Presbytery of the priest, in the monk's cell, and in the sanctuary of our Lord; but also in the mansions of the great, in the houses of the citizens, and cottages of the peasants. When the Bible began to be read in the families of Christendom, Christendom itself was changed. Then arose other habits, other manners, other conversations, and another life. With the publication of the New Testament, the Reformation left the School and the Church to take possession of the hearts of the people.

The effect produced was immense. The Christianity of the primitive Church, drawn by the publication of the Holy Scriptures from the oblivion of centuries in

which it had lain, was thus presented before the eyes of the nation; and this view was sufficient to justify the attacks that had been made against Rome. The simplest men, provided they knew how to read, women, mechanics (our informant is a contemporary and violent opponent of the Reformation) eagerly studied the New Testament. They carried it about with them; soon they knew it by heart, and the pages of this book loudly proclaimed the perfect unison of Luther's Reformation with the Divine revelation.

And yet it was only by fragments that the doctrine of the Bible and of the Reformation had been set forth hitherto. A certain truth had been put forward in one writing; a certain error attacked in another. On one vast plain lay scattered and confused the ruins of the old edifice and the materials of the new: but the new edifice was wanting. The publication of the New Testament undoubtedly satisfied this want. The Reformation could say, as it gave this book:

Here is my system! But as every man is at liberty to assert that his [339] system is that of the Bible, the Reformation was called to arrange what it had found in Scripture. And this Melancthon now did in its name.

He had walked with regular but confident steps in the development of his theology, and had from time to time published the results of his inquiries. Before this, in 1520, he had declared that in several of the seven sacraments he could see nothing but an imitation of the Jewish ceremonies; and in the infallibility of the pope, a haughty presumption equally opposed to the Holy Scriptures and to good sense. "To contend against these doctrines," he had said, "we require more than one Hercules." Thus had Melancthon reached the same point as Luther, although by a calmer and more scientific process. The time had come in which he was to confess his faith in his turn. In 1521, during Luther's captivity, Melancthon's celebrated work, "On the Common-places of Theology," had presented to christian Europe a body of doctrine of solid foundation and admirable proportion. A simple and majestic unity appeared before the astonished eyes of the new generation. The translation of the Testament justified the Reformation to the people; Melancthon's Commonplaces justified it in the opinion of the learned.

For fifteen centuries the Church had existed, and had never seen such a work. Forsaking the ordinary developments of scholastic theology, Luther's friends at last gave the world a theological system derived solely from Scripture. In it there reigned a breath of life, a vitality of understanding, a strength of conviction, and a simplicity of statement, forming a striking contrast with the subtle and pedantic systems of the

schools. The most philosophical minds, as well as the strictest theologians, were equally filled with admiration.

Erasmus entitled this work a wondrous army drawn up in battle array against the tyrannous battalions of the false doctors; and while he avowed his dissent from the author on several points, he added, that although he had always loved him, he had never loved him so much as after reading this work. "So true it is," said Calvin when presenting it subsequently to France, "that the greatest simplicity is the greatest virtue in treating of the christian doctrine."

But no one felt such joy as Luther. Throughout life this work was the object of his admiration. The disconnected sounds that his hand, in the deep emotion of his soul, had drawn from the harp of the prophets and apostles, were here blended together in one enchanting harmony. Those scattered stones, which he had laboriously hewn from the quarries of Scripture, were now combined into a majestic edifice. Hence he never ceased recommending the study of this work to the youths who came to Wittenberg in search of knowledge: "If you desire to become theologians," he would say, "read Melancthon." According to Melancthon, a deep conviction of the wretched state to which man is reduced by sin is the foundation on which the edifice of christian theology should be raised. This universal evil is the primary fact, the leading idea on which the science is based; it is the characteristic that distinguishes theology from those sciences whose only instrument is reason.

The christian divine, diving into the heart of man, explains its laws and mysterious attractions, as another philosopher in afteryears explained the laws and attraction of bodies. "Original sin," said he, "is an inclination born with us,—a certain impulse which is agreeable to us,—a certain force leading us to sin, and which has been communicated by Adam to all his posterity. As in fire there is a native energy impelling it to mount upward, as there is in the loadstone a natural quality by which iron is attracted; so also there is in man a primitive force that inclines him to evil. I grant that in Socrates, Xenocrates, and Zeno were found temperance, firmness, and chastity; these shadows of virtues were found in impure hearts and originated in self-love. This is why we should regard them not as real virtues, but as vices." This language may seem harsh; but not so if we apprehend Melancthon's meaning aright. No one was more willing than himself to acknowledge virtues in the pagans that entitled them to the esteem of man; but he laid down this great truth, that the sovereign law given by God to all his creatures, is to love him above all things. Now, if man, in doing that which God commands, does it not from love to God, but from love of self, can God accept him for daring to substitute himself in the place of His

infinite Majesty? and can there be no sinfulness in an action that is express rebellion against the supreme Deity?

The Wittenberg divine then proceeds to show how man is saved from this wretchedness. "The apostle!" said he, "invites thee to contemplate the Son of God sitting at the right hand of the Father, mediating and interceding for us; and calls upon thee to feel assured that thy sins are forgiven thee, that thou art reputed righteous, and accepted by the Father for the sake of the Son who suffered for us [340] on the cross."

The first edition of the Common-places is especially remarkable for the manner in which the theologian of Germany speaks of free will. He saw more clearly perhaps than Luther, for he was a better theologian than he, that this doctrine could not be separated from that which constituted the very essence of the Reformation. Man's justification before God proceeds from faith alone: this is the first point. This faith enters man's heart by the grace of God alone: here is the second. Melancthon saw clearly that if he allowed that man had any natural ability to believe, he would be throwing down in the second point that great doctrine of grace which he had stated in the first. He had too much discernment and understanding of the Holy Scriptures to be mistaken in so important a matter. But he went too far. Instead of confining himself within the limits of the religious question, he entered upon metaphysics. He established a fatalism which might tend to represent God as the author of evil,—a doctrine which has no foundation in Scripture. "As all things which happen," said he, "happen necessarily according to the Divine predestination, there is no such thing as liberty in our wills."

But the object Melancthon had particularly in view was to present theology as a system of piety. The schoolmen had so dried up the doctrine as to leave no traces of vitality in it. The task of the Reformation was therefore to reanimate this lifeless doctrine. In the subsequent editions, Melancthon felt the necessity of expounding these doctrines with greater clearness. But such was not precisely the case in 1521. "To know Christ," said he, "is to know his blessings. Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, desiring to give a summary of the christian doctrines, does not philosophize on the mystery of the Trinity, on the mode of incarnation, on active or passive creation; of what then does he speak?—of the law,—of sin,—of grace. On this our knowledge of Christ depends."

The publication of this body of theology was of inestimable value to the cause of truth. Calumnies were refuted; prejudices swept away. In the churches, palaces, and universities, Melancthon's genius found admirers, who esteemed the graces of his

character. Even those who knew not the author were attracted to his creed by his book. The roughness and occasional violence of Luther's language had often repelled many. But here was a man who explained those mighty truths whose sudden explosion had shaken the world, with great elegance of style, exquisite taste, admirable perspicuity, and perfect order. The work was sought after and read with avidity, and studied with ardor. Such gentleness and moderation won all hearts. Such nobility and force commanded their respect; and the superior classes of society, hitherto undecided, were gained over by a wisdom, that made use of such beautiful language.

On the other hand, the adversaries of truth, whom Luther's terrible blows had not yet humbled, remained for a time silent and disconcerted at the appearance of Melancthon's treatise. They saw that there was another man as worthy of their hatred as Luther himself. "Alas!" exclaimed they, "unhappy Germany! to what extremity wilt thou be brought by this new birth!"

Between the years 1521 and 1595 the Common-places passed through sixty-seven editions, without including translations. Next to the Bible, this is the book that has possibly contributed most to the establishment of the evangelical doctrine.

CHAPTER 10

Opposition—Henry VIII—Wolsey—The Queen—Fisher—Thomas More—Luther's Books burnt—Henry's Attack on Luther—Presented to the Pope—Its Effect on Luther—Energy and Violence—Luther's Reply—Answer by the Bishop of Rochester—Reply of Thomas More—Henry's Proceedings

While the "grammarian" Melancthon was contributing by these gentle strains a powerful support to Luther, men of authority, enemies to the reformer, were turning violently against him. He had escaped from the Wartburg and reappeared on the stage of the world; and at this news the rage of his former enemies was revived.

Luther had been three months and a half at Wittenberg when a rumour, increased by the thousand tongues of fame, brought intelligence that one of the greatest kings of Christendom had risen against him. Henry VIII, head of the house of Tudor, a prince descended from the families of York and Lancaster, and in whose person, after so much bloodshed, the red and white roses were at length united, the mighty king of England, who claimed to re-establish on the continent, and especially in France, the former influence of his crown,—had just written a book against the poor monk of Wittenberg. "There is much boasting about a little book by the King of England," wrote Luther to Lange on the 26th of June 1522.

Henry was then thirty-one years old; "he was tall, strong-built and proportioned, and had an air of authority and empire." His countenance expressed the vivacity of his mind; vehement, presuming the make everything give way to the violence of his passions, and thirsting for glory, he at first concealed his faults under a certain impetuosity that is peculiar to youth, and flatterers were not wanting to encourage them. He would often visit, in company with his courtiers, the house of his chaplain, Thomas Wolsey, the son of an Ipswich butcher.

Endowed with great skill, of overweening ambition, and of unbounded audacity, this man, protected by the Bishop of Winchester, chancellor of the kingdom, had rapidly advanced in his master's favour, and allured him to his residence by the attractions of pleasures and disorders, in which the young prince would not have ventured to indulge in his own palace. This is recorded by Polydore Virgil, at that time papal sub-collector in England. In these dissolute meetings, the chaplain surpassed the licentiousness of the young courtiers who attended Henry VIII. Forgetful of the decorum befitting a minister of the Church, he would sing, dance, laugh, play the fool, fence, and indulge in obscene conversation. By these means he

succeeded in obtaining the first place in the king's councils, and, as sole minister, all the princes of Christendom were forced to purchase his favour.

Henry lived in the midst of balls, banquets, and jousting, and madly squandered the treasures his father had slowly accumulated. Magnificent tournaments succeeded each other without interval. In these sports the king, who was distinguished above all the combatants by his manly beauty, played the chief part. If the contest appeared for a moment doubtful, the strength and address of the young monarch, or the artful policy of his opponents, gave him the victory, and the lists resounded with shouts and applause in his honour. The vanity of the youthful prince was inflated by these easy triumphs, and there was no success in the world to which he thought he might not aspire. The queen was often seen among the spectators. Her serious features and sad look, her absent and dejected air, contrasted strongly with the noise and glitter of these festivities. Shortly after his accession to the throne, Henry VIII had espoused for reasons of state Catherine of Aragon, his senior by eight years: she was his brother Arthur's widow, and aunt to Charles V. While her husband followed his pleasures, the virtuous Catherine, whose piety was truly Spanish, would leave her bed in the middle of the night to take a silent part in the prayers of the monks. She would kneel down without cushion or carpet. At five in the morning, after taking a little rest, she would again rise, and putting on the Franciscan dress, for she had been admitted into the tertiary order of St. Francis, and hastily throwing the royal garments around her, would repair to church at six o'clock to join in the service.

Two beings, living in such different spheres, could not long continue together. Romish piety had other representatives besides Catherine in the court of Henry VIII. John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, then nearly seventy years of age, as distinguished for learning as for the austerity of his manners, was the object of universal veneration. He had been the oldest councillor of Henry VII, and the Duchess of Richmond, grandmother to Henry VIII, calling him to her bedside, had commended to his care the youth and inexperience of her grandson. The king, in the midst of his irregularities, long continued to revere the aged bishop as a father.

A man much younger than Fisher, a layman and lawyer, had before this attracted general attention by his genius and noble character. His name was Thomas More, son of one of the judges of the King's Bench. He was poor, austere, and diligent. At the age of twenty he had endeavoured to quench the passions of youth by wearing a shirt of haircloth, and by self-scourging. On one occasion, being summoned by Henry VIII while he was attending mass, he replied, that God's service was before the king's. Wolsey introduced him to Henry, who employed him on various embassies, and

showed him much kindness. He would often send for him, and converse with him on astronomy, on Wolsey, and on divinity.

In truth, the king himself was not acquainted with the Romish doctrines. It would appear, that if Arthur had lived, Henry was destined for the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure, tournaments, banquets, Elizabeth Blunt and others of his mistresses—all were mixed up in the mind and life of this prince, who had masses of his own composition sung in his chapel.

As soon as Henry had heard talk of Luther, he became indignant against him, and hardly was the decree of the Diet of Worms known in England, before he ordered the pontiff's bull against the reformer's works to be put in execution. On the 12th of May 1521, Thomas Wolsey, who, together with the office of chancellor of England, combined those of cardinal and legate of Rome, went in solemn procession to St. Paul's. This man, whose pride had attained the highest pitch, thought himself the equal of kings. He used to sit in a chair of gold, sleep in a golden bed, and a cover of cloth of gold was spread on the table at his meals. On this occasion he displayed great magnificence. His household, consisting of 800 persons, among whom were barons, knights, and sons of the most distinguished families, who hoped by serving him to obtain public office, surrounded this haughty prelate. Silk and gold glittered not only on his garments (he was the first ecclesiastic who ventured to dress so sumptuously), but even on the housings and harness of the horses.

Before him walked a tall priest bearing a silver column terminated by a cross; behind him, another ecclesiastic of similar height carried the archiepiscopal crosier of York; a nobleman at his side held the cardinal's hat. Lords, prelates, ambassadors from the pope and emperor, accompanied him, followed by a long line of mules bearing chests covered with the richest and most brilliant hangings. It was this magnificent procession that was carrying to the burning pile the writings of the poor monk of Wittenberg. When they reached the cathedral, the insolent priest placed his cardinal's hat on the altar. The virtuous Bishop of Rochester stationed himself at the foot of the cross, and with agitated voice preached earnestly against the heresy. After this the impious books of the heresiarch were brought together and devoutly burned in the presence of an immense crowd. Such was the first intelligence that England received of the Reformation.

Henry would not stop here. This prince, whose hand was ever upraised against his adversaries, his wives, or his favourites, wrote to the elector-palatine: "It is the devil, who, by Luther's means, has kindled this immense conflagration. If Luther will not be converted, let him and his writings be burnt together!"

This was not enough. Having been convinced that the progress of heresy was owing to the extreme ignorance of the German princes, Henry thought the moment had arrived for showing his learning. The victories of his battle-axe did not permit him to doubt of those that were reserved for his pen. But another passion, vanity, ever greatest in the smallest minds, spurred the king onward. He was humiliated at having no title to oppose to that of "Catholic," and "Most Christian," borne by the kings of Spain and France, and he had long been begging a similar distinction from the court of Rome. What would be more likely to procure it than to attack upon heresy? Henry therefore threw aside the kingly purple, and descended from his throne into the arena of theological discussion. He enlisted Thomas Aquinas, Peter Lombard, Alexander Hales, and Bonaventure into his service; and the world beheld the publication of the Defence of the Seven Sacraments, against Martin Luther, by the most invincible King of England and France, Lord of Ireland, Henry the eighth of that name.

"I will rush in front of the Church to save her," said the King of England in this treatise; "I will receive in my bosom the poisoned arrows of her assailants. The present state of things calls me to do so. Every servant of Christ, whatever be his age, sex, or rank, should rise up against the common enemy of Christendom.

"Let us put on a twofold breastplate; the heavenly breastplate, to conquer by the weapons of truth him who combats with those of error; but also an earthly breastplate, that if he shows himself obstinate in his malice, the hand of the executioner may constrain him to be silent, and that once at least he may be useful to the world, by the terrible example of his death."

Henry VIII was unable to hide the contempt he felt towards his feeble adversary. "This man," said the crowned theologian, "seems to be in the pangs of childbirth; after a travail without precedent, he produces nothing but wind. Remove the daring envelope of the insolent verbiage with which he clothes his absurdities, as an ape is clothed in purple, and what remains? a wretched and empty sophism."

The king defends, successively, the mass, penance, confirmation, marriage, orders, and extreme unction; he is not sparing of abusive language towards his opponent; he calls him by turns a wolf of hell, a poisonous viper, a limb of the devil. Even Luther's sincerity is attacked. Henry VIII crushes the mendicant monk with his royal anger, "and writes as 'twere with his scepter," says an historian. And [343] yet it must be confessed that his work was not bad, considering the author and his age. The style is not altogether without force; but the public of the day did not confine

themselves to paying it due justice. The theological treatise of the powerful King of England was received with a torrent of adulation. "The most learned work the sun ever saw," cried some.—"We can only compare it," re-echoed others, "to the works of Augustine. He is a Constantine, a Charlemagne!"— He is more," said others, "he is a second Solomon!"

These flatteries soon extended beyond the limits of England. Henry desired John Clarke, dean of Windsor, his ambassador at Rome, to present his book to the sovereign pontiff. Leo X received the envoy in full consistory. Clarke laid the royal work before him, saying: "The king my master assures you that, having now refuted Luther's errors with the pen, he is ready to combat his adherents with the sword." Leo, touched with this promise, replied, that the king's book could not have been written without the aid of the Holy Ghost, and conferred upon Henry the title of Defender of the Faith, which is still borne by the sovereigns of England.

The reception which this volume met with at Rome contributed greatly to increase the number of its readers. In a few months many thousand copies issued from different presses. "The whole christian world," says Cochloeus, "was filled with admiration and joy."

Such extravagant panegyrics augmented the insufferable vanity of this chief of the Tudors. He himself seemed to have no doubt that he was inspired by the Holy Ghost. From that time he would suffer no contradiction. His papacy was no longer at Rome, but at Greenwich; infallibility reposed on his shoulders: at a subsequent period this contributed greatly to the Reformation of England.

Luther read Henry's book with a smile mingled with disdain, impatience, and indignation. The falsehood and the abuse it contained, but especially the air of contempt and compassion which the king assumed, irritated the Wittenberg doctor to the highest degree. The thought that the pope had crowned this work, and that on all sides the enemies of the Gospel were triumphing over the Reformation and the reformer as already overthrown and vanquished, increased his indignation. Besides, what reason had he to temporize? Was he not fighting in the cause of a King greater than all the kings of the earth? The meekness of the Gospel appeared to him unseasonable. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. He went beyond all bounds. Persecuted, insulted, hunted down, wounded, the furious lion turned round, and proudly roused himself to crush his enemy. The elector, Spalatin, Melancthon, and Bugenhagen, strove in vain to pacify him. They would have prevented his replying; but nothing could stop him. "I will not be gentle towards the King of England," said he. "I know that it is vain for me to humble myself, to give way, to entreat, to try

peaceful methods. At length I will show myself more terrible towards these furious beasts, who goad me every day with their horns. I will turn mine upon them. I will provoke Satan until he falls down lifeless and exhausted. If this heretic does not recant, says Henry VIII the new Thomas, he must be burnt alive!

Such are the weapons they are not employing against me: the fury of stupid asses and swine of the brood of Thomas Aquinas; and then the stake. Well then, be it so! Let these hogs advance if they dare, and let them burn me! Here I am waiting for them. After my death, though my ashes should be thrown into a thousand seas, they will rise, pursue, and swallow up this abominable herd. Living, I shall be the enemy of the papacy; burnt, I shall be its destruction. Go then, swine of St. Thomas, do what seemeth good to you. You will ever find Luther like a bear upon your way, and as a lion in your path. He will spring upon you whithersoever you go, and will never leave you at peace, until he has broken your iron heads, and ground your brazen foreheads into dust."

Luther first reproaches Henry VIII with having supported his doctrines solely by the decrees and opinions of men. "As for me," says he, "I never cease crying the Gospel, the Gospel! Christ, Christ!—And my adversaries continue to reply: Custom, custom! Ordinances, ordinances! Fathers, fathers!—St. Paul says: Let not your faith stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God (1 Corinthians 2:5). And the apostle by this thunderclap from heaven overthrows and disperses, as the wind scatters the dust, all the hobgoblins of this Henry. Frightened and confounded, these Thomists, Papists, and Henrys fall prostrate before the thunder of these words." He then refutes the king's book in detail, and overturns his arguments one after the other, with a perspicuity, spirit, and knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and history of the Church, but also with an assurance, disdain, and sometimes violence, that ought not to surprise us.

Having reached the end of his confutation, Luther again becomes indignant that his opponent should derive his arguments from the Fathers only: this was the basis of the whole controversy. "To all the world of the Father and of men, of angels and of devils," said he, "I oppose, not old customs, not the multitude of men, but the Word of Eternal Majesty,—the Gospel, which even my adversaries are obliged to recognise. To this I hold fast, on this I repose, in this I boast, in this I exult and triumph over the papists, the Thomists, the Henrys, the sophists, and all the swine of hell. The King of heaven is with me; for this reason I fear nothing, although a thousand Augustines, a thousand Cyprians, and a thousand of these churches which Henry defends, should rise up against me. It is a small matter that I should despise and

revile a king of the earth, since he himself does not fear in his writings to blaspheme the King of heaven, and to profane His holy name by the most impudent falsehoods."

"Papists!" exclaimed he in conclusion, "will ye never cease from your idle attacks? Do what you please. Nevertheless, before that Gospel which I preach down must come popes, bishops, priests, monks, princes, devils, death, sin, and all that is not Christ or in Christ."

Thus spoke the poor monk. His violence certainly cannot be excused, if we judge it by the rule to which he himself appealed,—by the Word of God. It cannot even be justified by alleging either the grossness of the age (for Melancthon knew how to observe decorum in his writings), or the energy of his character, for if this energy had any influence over his language, passion also exerted more. It is better, then, that we should condemn it. And yet, that we may be just, we should observe decorum in his writings), or the energy of his character, for if this energy had any influence over his language, passion also exerted more. It is better, then, that we should condemn it. And yet, that we may be just, we should observe that in the sixteenth century this violence did not appear so strange as it would now-a-days. The learned were then an estate, as well as the princes. By becoming a writer, Henry had attacked Luther. Luther replied according to the established law in the republic of letters, that we must consider the truth of what is said, and not the quality of him that says it. Let us add also, that when this same king turned against the pope, the abuse which the Romish writers and the pope himself poured upon him, far exceeded all that Luther had ever said.

Besides, if Luther called Dr. Eck an ass and Henry VIII a hog, he indignantly rejected the intervention of the secular arm; while Eck was writing a dissertation to prove that heretics ought to be burned, and Henry was erecting scaffolds that he might conform with the precepts of the chancellor of Ingolstadt.

Great was the emotion at the king's court; Surrey, Wolsey, and the crowd of courtiers, put a stop to the festivities and pageantry at Greenwich to vent their indignation in abuse and sarcasm. The venerable Bishop of Rochester, who had been delighted to see the young prince, formerly confided to his care, breaking a lance in defense of the Church, was deeply wounded by the attack of the monk. He replied to it immediately. His words distinctly characterize the age and the Church. "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines, says Christ in the Song of Songs. This teaches us," said Fisher, "that we must take the heretics before they grow big. Now Luther is become a big fox, so old, so cunning, and so sly, that he is very difficult to

catch. What do I say? a fox? He is a mad dog, a ravening wolf, a cruel bear; or rather all those animals in one; for the monster includes many beasts within him."

Thomas More also descended into the arena to contend with the monk of Wittenberg. Although a layman, his zeal against the Reformation amounted to fanaticism, if it did not even urge him to shed blood. When young nobles undertake the defense of the papacy, their violence often exceeds even that of the ecclesiastics. "Reverend brother, father, tippler, Luther, runagate of the order of St. Augustine, misshapen bacchanal of either faculty, unlearned doctor of theology." Such is the language addressed to the reformer by one of the most illustrious men of his age. He then proceeds to explain the manner in which Luther had composed his book against Henry VIII:

"He called his companions together, and desired them to go each his own way and pick up all sorts of abuse and scurrility. One frequented the public carriages and boats; another the baths and gambling-houses; a third the taverns and barbers' shops; a fourth the mills and brothels. They noted down in their tablets all the most insolent, filthy, and infamous things they heard; and bringing back all these abominations and impurities, they discharged them into that filthy kennel which is called Luther's mind. If he retracts his falsehoods and calumnies," continues More, "if he lays aside his folly and his madness, if he swallows his own filth he will find one who will seriously discuss with him. But if he proceeds as he has begun, joking, teasing, fooling, calumniating, vomiting sewers and cesspools let others do what they please; as for me, I should prefer [345] leaving the little friar to his won fury and filth." More would have done better to have restrained his own. Luther never degraded his style to so low a degree. He made no reply.

This writing still further increased Henry's attachment to More. He would often visit him in his humble dwelling at Chelsea. After dinner, the king, leaning on his favourite's shoulder, would walk in the garden, while Mistress More and her children, concealed behind a window, could not turn away their astonished eyes. After one of these walks, More, who knew his man well, said to his wife: "If my head could win him a single castle in France, he would not hesitate to cut it off."

The king, thus defended by the Bishop of Rochester and by his future chancellor, had no need to resume his pen. Confounded at finding himself treated in the face of Europe as a common writer, Henry VIII abandoned the dangerous position he had taken, and throwing away the pen of the theologian, had recourse to the more effectual means of diplomacy.

An ambassador was despatched from the court of Greenwich with a letter for the elector and dukes of Saxony. "Luther, the real serpent fallen from heaven," wrote he, "is pouring out his floods of venom upon the earth. He is stirring up revolts in the Church of Jesus Christ, abolishing laws, insulting the powers that be, inflaming the laity against the priests, and laymen and priests against the pope, subjects against their sovereigns, and desires nothing better than to see Christians fighting and destroying one another, and the enemies of our faith hailing this scene of carnage with a frightful grin.

"What is this doctrine which he calls evangelical, if it be not Wickliffe's? Now, most honoured uncles, I know what your ancestors have done to destroy it. In Bohemia they hunted it down like a wild beast, and driving it into a pit, they shut it up and kept it fast. You will not allow it to escape through your negligence, lest, creeping into Saxony, and becoming master of the whole of Germany, its smoking nostrils should pour forth the flames of hell, spreading that conflagration far and wide which your nation hath so often wished to extinguish in its blood.

"For this reason, most worthy princes, I feel obliged to exhort you and even to entreat you in the name of all that is most sacred, promptly to extinguish the cursed sect of Luther: put no one to death, if that can be avoided; but if this heretical obstinacy continues, then shed blood without hesitation, in order that the abominable heresy may disappear from under heaven.

The elector and his brother referred the kings to the approaching council. Thus Henry VIII was far from attaining his end. "So great a name mixed up in the dispute," said Paul Sarpi, "served to render it more curious, and to conciliate general favour towards Luther, as usually happens in combats and tournaments, where the spectators have always a leaning to the weaker party, and take delight in exaggerating the merit of his actions."

CHAPTER 11

General Movement—The Monks—How the Reformation was carried on—Unlearned Believer—The Old and the New Doctors—Printing and Literature—Bookselling and Colportage

A great movement was going on. The Reformation, which, after the Diet of Worms, had been thought to be confined with its first teacher in the narrow chamber of a strong castle, was breaking forth in every part of the empire, and, so to speak, throughout Christendom. The two classes, hitherto mixed up together, were now beginning to separate; and the partisans of a monk, whose only defense was his tongue, now took their stand fearlessly in the face of the servants of Charles V and Leo X. Luther had scarcely left the walls of the Wartburg, the pope had excommunicated all his adherents, the imperial diet had just condemned his doctrine, the princes were endeavouring to crush it in most of the German states, the ministers of Rome were lowering it in the eyes of the people by their violent invectives, the other states of Christendom were calling upon Germany to sacrifice a man whose assaults they feared even at a distance; and yet this new sect, few in numbers, and among whose members there was no organisation, no bond of union, nothing in short that concentrated their common power, was already frightening the vast, ancient, and powerful sovereignty of Rome by the energy of its faith and the rapidity of its conquests.

On all sides, as in the first warm days of spring, the seed was bursting from the earth spontaneously and without effort. Every day showed some new progress. Individuals, villages, towns, whole cities, joined in this new confession of the name of Jesus Christ. There was unpitying opposition, there were terrible persecutions, but the mysterious power that urged forward all these people was irresistible; and the persecuted, quickening their steps, going forward through exile, imprisonment, and the burning pile, everywhere prevailed over their persecutors.

The monastic orders that Rome had spread over Christendom, like a net intended to catch souls and keep them prisoners, were the first to break their bonds, and rapidly to propagate the new doctrine throughout the Church. The Augustines of Saxony had walked with Luther, and felt that inward experience of the Holy Word which, by putting them in possession of God himself, dethroned Rome and her lofty assumptions. But in the other convents of the order, evangelical light had dawned in like manner. Sometimes they were old men, who, like Staupitz, had preserved the sound doctrines of truth in the midst of deluded Christendom, and who now besought God to permit them to depart in peace, for their eyes had seen his salvation. At other

times, they were young men, who had received Luther's teaching with the eagerness peculiar to their age. The Augustine convents at Nuremberg, Osnabruck, Dillingen, Ratisbon, Strasburg, and Antwerp, with those in Hesse and Wurtemberg, turned towards Jesus Christ, and by their courage excited the wrath of Rome.

But this movement was not confined to the Augustines only. High-spirited men imitated them in the monasteries of other orders, and notwithstanding the clamours of the monks, who would not abandon their carnal observances, notwithstanding the anger, contempt, sentences, discipline, and imprisonments of the cloister, they fearlessly raised their voices in behalf of that holy and precious truth, which they had found at last after so many painful inquiries, such despair and doubt, and such inward struggle. In the majority of the cloisters, the most spiritual, pious, and learned monks declared for the Reformation. In the Franciscan convent at Ulm, Eberlin, and Kettenbach attacked the slavish works of monasticism, and the superstitious observances of the Church, with an eloquence capable of moving the whole nation; and they called for the immediate abolition of the monasteries and houses of ill-fame. Another Franciscan, Stephen Kempe, preached the Gospel at Hamburg, and, alone, presented a firm front to the hatred, envy, menaces, snares, and attacks of the priests, who were irritated at seeing the crowd abandon their altars, and flock with enthusiasm to hear his sermons.

Frequently the superiors of the convents were the first led away in the path of reform. At Halberstadt, Neuenwerk, Halle, and Sagan, the priors set the example to their monks, or at least declared that if a monk felt his conscience burdened by the weight of monastic vows, far from detaining him in the convent, they would take him by the shoulders and thrust him out of doors.

Indeed throughout all Germany the monks were seen laying down their frocks and cowls at the gates of the monasteries. Some were expelled by the violence of the brethren or the abbots; others, of mild and pacific character, could no longer endure the continual disputes, abuse, clamour, and hatred which pursued them even in their slumbers; the majority were convinced that the monastic life was opposed to the will of God and to a christian life; some had arrived at this conviction by degrees; others suddenly, by reading a passage in the Bible. The sloth, grossness, ignorance, and degradation that constituted the very nature of the mendicant orders, inspired with indescribable disgust all men of elevated mind, who could not longer support the society of their vulgar associates. One day, a Franciscan going his rounds, stopped with the box in his hand begging alms at a blacksmith's forge in Nuremberg: "Why," said the smith, "do you not gain your bread by the work of your own hands?" At these words the sturdy monk threw away his staff, and seizing the hammer plied it

vigorously on the anvil. The useless mendicant had become an honest workman. His box and frock were sent back to the monastery. The monks were not the only persons who rallied round the standard of the Gospel; priests in still greater number began to preach the new doctrines. But preachers were not required for its propagation; it frequently acted on men's minds, and aroused them from their deep slumber without anyone having spoken.

Luther's writings were read in cities, towns, and even villages; at night by the fireside the schoolmaster would often read them aloud to an attentive audience. Some of the hearers were affected by their perusal; they would take up the Bible to clear away their doubts, and were struck with surprise at the astonishing contrast between the Christianity of the Bible and their own. After oscillating between Rome and Scripture, they soon took refuge with that living Word which shed so new and sweet a radiance on their hearts. While they were in this state, some evangelical preacher, probably a priest or a monk, would arrive. He spoke eloquently and with conviction; he announced that Christ had made full atonement for the sins of his people; he demonstrated by Holy Scripture the vanity of works and human penances. A terrible opposition would then break out; the clergy, and sometimes the magistrates, would strain every nerve to bring back the souls they were about to lose. But there was in the new preaching a harmony with Scripture and a hidden force that won all hearts, and subdued even the most rebellious. At the peril of their goods, and of their life if need be, they ranged themselves on the side of the Gospel, and forsook the lifeless and fanatical orators of the papacy. Sometimes the people, incenses at being so long misled, compelled them to retire; more frequently the priests, deserted by their flocks, without tithes or offerings, departed voluntarily and in sadness to seek a livelihood elsewhere. And while the supporters of the ancient hierarchy returned from these places sorrowful and dejected, and sometimes bidding farewell to their old flocks in the language of anathema, the people, transported with joy by peace and liberty, surrounded the new preachers with their applause, and, thirsting for the Word of God, carried them in triumph into the church and into the pulpit.

A word of power, proceeding from God, was at that time regenerating society. The people, or their leaders, would frequently invite some man celebrated for his faith to come and enlighten them; and instantly, for love of the Gospel, he abandoned his interests and his family, his country and friends.

The persecution often compelled the partisans of the Reformation to leave their homes: they reached some spot where it was as yet unknown; here they would enter a house that offered an asylum to poor travellers; there they would speak of the Gospel, read a Chapter to the attentive hearers, and perhaps, at the request of their new friends, obtained permission to preach once publicly in the church Upon this a

vast uproar would break out in the city, and the greatest exertions were ineffectual to quench it. If they could not preach in the church, they found some other spot. Every place became a temple. At Husum in Holstein, Hermann Tast, who was returning from Wittenberg, and against whom the clergy of the parish had closed the church doors, preached to an immense crowd in the cemetery, beneath the shade of two large trees, not far from the spot where, seven centuries before, Anschar had proclaimed the Gospel to the heathen. At Arnstadt, Gaspard Guttel, an Augustine monk, preached in the market-place. At Dantzie, the Gospel was announced on a little hill outside of the city. At Gosslar, a Wittenberg student taught the new doctrines in a meadow planted with lime-trees; whence the evangelical Christians were denominated the Lime-tree Brethren.

While the priests were exhibiting a sordid covetousness before the eyes of the people, the new preachers said to them, "Freely we have received, freely do we give." The idea often published by the new preachers from the pulpit, that Rome had formerly sent the Germans a corrupted Gospel, and that now for the first time Germany heard the Word of Christ in its heavenly and primal beauty, produced a deep impression on men's minds. And the noble thought of the equality of all men, of a universal brotherhood in Jesus Christ, laid strong hold upon those souls which for so long a period had groaned beneath the yoke of feudalism and of the papacy of the Middle Ages. Often would unlearned Christians, with the New Testament in their hands, undertake to justify the doctrine of the Reformation. The catholics who remained faithful to Rome withdrew in affright; for to priests and monks alone had been assigned the task of studying sacred literature. The latter were therefore compelled to come forward; the conference began; but erelong, overwhelmed by the declarations of Holy Scripture cited by these laymen, the priests and monks knew not how to reply "Unhappily Luther had persuaded his followers," says Cochloeus, "to put no faith in any other oracle than the Holy Scriptures." A shout was raised in the assembly, and proclaimed the scandalous ignorance of these old theologians, who had hitherto been reputed such great scholars by their own party.

Men of the lowest station, and even the weaker sex, with the aid of God's Word, persuaded and led away men's hearts. Extraordinary works are the result of extraordinary times. At Ingolstadt, under the eyes of Dr. Eck, a young weaver read Luther's works to the assembled crowd. In this very city, the university having resolved to compel a disciple of Melancthon to retract, a woman, named Argula de Staufen, undertook his defense, and challenged the doctors to a public disputation. Women and children, artisans and soldiers, knew more of the Bible than the doctors of the schools or the priests of the altars.

Christendom was divided into two hostile bodies, and their aspects were strikingly contrasted. Opposed to the old champions of the hierarchy, who had neglected the study of languages and the cultivation of literature (as one of their own body informs us), were generous-minded youths, devoted to study, investigating Scripture, and familiarizing themselves with the masterpieces of antiquity. Possessing an active mind, an elevated soul, and intrepid heart, [348] these young men soon acquired such knowledge, that for a long period none could compete with them. It was not only the vitality of their faith which rendered the superior to their contemporaries, but an elegance of style, a perfume of antiquity, a sound philosophy, a knowledge of the world, completely foreign to the theologians "of the old leaven," as Cochloeus himself terms them. Accordingly, when these youthful defenders of the Reformation met the Romish doctors in any assembly, they attacked them with such ease and confidence, that these ignorant men hesitated, became embarrassed, and fell into a contempt merited in the eyes of all.

The ancient edifice was crumbling under the load of superstition and ignorance; the new one was rising on the foundations of faith and knowledge. New elements entered deep into the lives of the people. Torpor and dulness were in all parts succeeded by a spirit of inquiry and a thirst for instruction. An active, enlightened, and living faith took the place of superstitious devotion and ascetic meditations. Works of piety succeeded bigoted observances and penances. The pulpit prevailed over the ceremonies of the altar; and the ancient and sovereign authority of God's Word was at length restored in the Church.

The printing-press, that powerful machine discovered in the fifteenth century, came to the support of all these exertions, and its terrible missiles were continually battering the walls of the enemy.

The impulse which the Reformation gave to popular literature in Germany was immense. While in the year 1513 only thirty-five publications had appeared, and thirty-seven in 1517, the number of books increased with astonishing rapidity after the appearance of Luther's theses. In 1518 we find seventy-one different works; in 1519, one hundred and eleven; in 1520, two hundred and eight; in 1521, two hundred and eleven; in 1522, three hundred and fortyseven; and in 1523, four hundred and ninety-eight And where were all these published? For the most part at Wittenberg. And who were their authors? Generally Luther and his friends. In 1522 one hundred and thirty of the reformer's writings were published; and in the year following, one hundred and eighty-three. In this same year only twenty Roman-catholic publications appeared. The literature of Germany thus saw the light in the midst of struggles, and contemporaneously with her religion. Already it appeared learned, profound, full of

daring and life, as later times have seen it. The national spirit showed itself for the first time without mixture, and at the very moment of its birth received the baptism of fire from christian enthusiasm.

What Luther and his friends composed, others circulated. Monks, convinced of the unlawfulness of monastic obligations, desirous of exchanging a long life of slothfulness for one of active exertion, but too ignorant to proclaim the Word of God, travelled through the provinces, visiting hamlets and cottages, where they sold the books of Luther and his friends. Germany soon swarmed with these bold colporteurs.

Printers and booksellers eagerly welcomed every writing in defense of the Reformation; but they rejected the books of the opposite party, as generally full of ignorance and barbarism. If anyone of them ventured to sell a book in favour of the papacy, and offered it for sale in the fairs at Frankfort or elsewhere, merchants, purchasers, and men of letters overwhelmed him with ridicule and sarcasm. It was in vain that the emperor and princes had published severe edicts against the writings of the reformers. As soon as an inquisitorial visit was to be paid, the dealers who had received secret intimation concealed the books that it was intended to proscribe; and the multitude, ever eager for what is prohibited, immediately bought them up, and read them with the greater avidity. It was not only in Germany that such scenes were passing; Luther's writings were translated into French, Spanish, English, and Italian, and circulated among these nations.

CHAPTER 12

Luther at Zwickau—The Castle of Freyberg—Worms—Frankfort—Universal Movement—Wittenberg the Centre of the Reformation—Luther's Sentiments

If the most puny instruments inflicted such terrible blows on Rome, what was it when the voice of the monk of Wittenberg was heard? Shortly after the discomfiture of the new prophets, Luther, in a layman's attire, traversed the territories of Duke George in a wagon. His gown was hidden, and the reformer seemed to be a plain citizen of the country. If he had been recognised, if he had fallen into the hands of the exasperated duke, perhaps his fate would have been sealed. He was going to preach at Zwickau, the birthplace [349] of the pretended prophets. It was no sooner known at Schneeberg, Annaberg, and the surrounding places, that the people crowded around him. Fourteen thousand persons flocked into the city, and as there was no church that could contain such numbers, Luther went into the balcony of the town-hall, and preached before an audience of twenty-five thousand persons who thronged the market-place, some of whom had mounted on heaps of cut stones piled up near the building.

The servant of God was dilating with fervour on the election of grace, when suddenly cries were heard from the midst of the auditory. An old woman of haggard mein stretched out her emaciated arms from the stone on which she had taken her station, and seemed desirous of restraining with her fleshless hands that crowd that was about to fall prostrate at the feet of Jesus. Her wild yells interrupted the preacher. "It was the devil," said Seckendorff, "who had taken the form of an old woman in order to excite a disturbance." But it was all in vain; the reformer's words silenced the wicked spirit; these thousands of hearers caught his enthusiasm; glances of admiration were exchanged; hands were warmly grasped, and erelong the tongue-tied monks, unable to avert the storm, found it necessary to leave Zwickau.

In the castle of Freyberg dwelt Henry, brother of Duke George. His wife, a princess of Mecklenburg, had the preceding year borne him a son who had been named Maurice. With a fondness for the table and for pleasure, Duke Henry combined the rudeness and coarse manners of a soldier. In other respects, he was pious after the fashion of the times, had gone to the Holy Land, and made a pilgrimage to St. Iago of Compostella. He would often say: "At Compostella I placed a hundred golden florins of the altar of the saint, and said to him: O St. Iago, to please thee I came hither; I make thee a present of this money; but if these knaves (the priests) take it from thee, I cannot help it; so be on your guard."

A Franciscan and a Dominican, both disciples of Luther, had been for Sometime preaching the Gospel at Freyberg. The duchess, whose piety had inspired her with a horror of heresy, listened to their sermons in astonishment that this gentle word of a Saviour was the object she had been taught to fear. Gradually her eyes were opened, and she found peace in Christ Jesus. No sooner had Duke George learnt that the Gospel was preached at Freyberg, than he entreated his brother to oppose these novelties. Chancellor Strehlin and the canons seconded his prayer with their fanaticism. A violent explosion took place in the court of Freyberg. Duke Henry harshly reprimanded and reproached his wife, and more than once the pious duchess watered her child's cradle with her tears. Yet by degrees her prayers and gentleness won the heart of her husband; the rough man was softened; harmony was restored between the married pair, and they were enabled to join in prayer beside their sleeping babe. Great destinies were hovering over that child; and from that cradle, where a christian mother had so often poured forth her sorrows, God was one day to bring forth the liberator of the Reformation.

Luther's intrepidity had excited the inhabitants of Worms. The imperial decree terrified the magistrates; all the churches were closed; but in a public place, filled by an immense crowd, a preacher ascended a rudely constructed pulpit, and proclaimed the Gospel with persuasive accents. If the authorities showed a disposition to interfere, the hearers dispersed in a moment, and stealthily carried away the pulpit; but the storm was no sooner passed, than it was immediately set up on some more secluded spot, to which the crowd again flocked to hear the Word of Christ. This temporary pulpit was every day carried from one place to another, and served to encourage the people, still agitated by the emotions of the great drama lately performed in their city.

At Frankfort on the Maine, one of the principal free cities of the empire, all was in commotion. A courageous evangelist, Ibach, preached salvation by Jesus Christ. The clergy, among whom was Cochloeus, so notorious by his writings and his opposition, irritated against this audacious colleague, denounced him to the Archbishop of Mentz. The council undertook his defense, although with timidity, but to no purpose, for the clergy discharged the evangelical minister, and compelled him to leave the town. Rome triumphed; everything seemed lost; the poor believers fancied themselves for ever deprived of the Word; but at the very moment when the citizens appeared inclined to yield to these tyrannical priests, many nobles declared for the Gospel. Max of Molnheim, Harmuth of Cronberg, George of Stockheim, and Emeric of Reiffenstein, whose estates lay near Frankfort, wrote to the council: "We are constrained to rise up against these spiritual wolves." And addressing the clergy, they

said: "Embrace the evangelical doctrine, recall Ibach, or else we will refuse to pay our tithes!"

The people, who listened gladly to the Reformation, being encouraged by the language of the nobles, began to put themselves in motion; and one day, just as Peter Mayer, the persecutor of Ibach and the most determined enemy of the reform, was going to preach against the heretics, a great uproar was heard. Mayer was alarmed, and hastily quitted the church. This movement decided the council. All the preachers were enjoined by proclamation to preach the pure Word of God, or the leave the city.

The light which proceeded from Wittenberg, as from the heart of the nation, was thus shedding its rays through the whole empire. In the west,—Berg, Cleves, Lippstadt, Munster, Wesel, Miltenberg, Mentz, Deux Ponts, and Strasburg, listened to the Gospel; on the south,—Hof, Schlesstadt, Bamberg, Esslingen, Halle in Swabia, Heilbrunn, Augsburg, Ulm, and many other places, received it with joy. In the east,—the duchy of Liegnitz, Prussia, and Pomerania opened their gates to it; and in the north,—Brunswick, Halberstadt, Gosslar, Zell, Friesland, Bremen, Hamburg, Holstein, and even Denmark, with other neighbouring countries, were moved at the sounds of this new doctrine.

The Elector Frederick had declared that he would allow the bishops to preach freely in his states, but that he would deliver no one into their hands. Accordingly, the evangelical teachers, persecuted in other countries, soon took refuge in Saxony. Ibach of Frankfort, Eberlin of Ulm, Kauxdorf of Magdeburg, Valentine Mustoeus, whom the canons of Halberstadt had horribly mutilated, and other faithful ministers, coming from all parts of Germany, fled to Wittenberg, as the only asylum in which they could be secure. Here they conversed with the reformers; at their feet they strengthened themselves in the faith; and communicated to them their own experience and the knowledge they had acquired. It is thus the waters of the rivers return by the clouds from the vast expanse of the ocean, to feed the glaciers whence they first descended to the plains.

The work which was evolving at Wittenberg, and formed in this manner of many different elements, became more and more the work of the nation, of Europe, and of Christendom. This school, founded by Frederick, and quickened by Luther, was the centre of an immense revolution which regenerated the Church, and impressed on it a real and living unity far superior to the apparent unity of Rome. The Bible reigned at Wittenberg, and its oracles were heard on all sides. This academy, the most recent of all, had acquired that rank and influence in Christendom which had hitherto belonged to the ancient university of Paris. The crowds that flocked thither from

every part of Europe made known the wants of the Church and of the nations; and as they quitted these walls, now become holy to them, they carried back with them to the Church and the people of the Word of Grace appointed to heal and to save the nations.

Luther, as he witnessed this success, felt his confidence increase. He beheld this feeble undertaking, begun in the midst of so many fears and struggles, changing the aspect of the christian world, and was himself astonished at the result. He had foreseen nothing of the kind, when first he rose up against Tetzel. Prostrate before the God whom he adored, he confessed the work to be His, and exulted in the assurance of a victory that could not be torn from him. "Our enemies threaten us with death," said he to Harmuth of Cronberg; "if they had as much wisdom as foolishness, they would, on the contrary, threaten us with life. What an absurdity and insult to presume to threaten death to Christ and Christians, who are themselves lords and conquerors of death! It is as if I would seek to frighten a man by saddling his horse and helping him to mount. Do they not know that Christ is risen from the dead? In their eyes He is still lying in the sepulchre; nay more—in hell. But we know that He lives." He was grieved at the thought that he was regarded as the author of a work, in the smallest details of which he beheld the hand of God. "Many believe because of me," said he. "But those alone truly believe, who would continue faithful even should they hear (which God forbid!) that I had denied Jesus Christ. True disciples believe not in Luther, but in Jesus Christ. As for myself, I do not care about Luther. "Whether he is a saint or a knave, what matters it? It is not he that I preach; but Christ. If the devil can take him, let him do so! But let Christ abide with us, and we shall abide also."

And vainly, indeed, would men endeavour to explain this great movement by mere human circumstances. Men of letters, it is true, sharpened their wits and discharged their keen-pointed arrows against the pope and the monks; the shout of liberty, which Germany had so often raised against the tyranny of the Italians, again resounded in the castles and provinces; the people were delighted with the song of "the nightingale of Wittenberg," a herald of the spring that was everywhere bursting forth. But it was not a mere outward movement, similar to that effected by a longing for earthly liberty, that was then accomplishing. Those who assert that the Reformation was brought about by bribing princes with the wealth of the convents,—the priests with permission to marry,—and the people with the prospect of freedom, are strangely mistaken in its nature. No doubt a useful employment of the funds that had hitherto supported the sloth of the monks; no doubt marriage and liberty, gifts [351] that proceed direct from God, might have favoured the development of the

Reformation; but the mainspring was not there. An interior revolution was then going on in the depths of the human heart.

Christians were again learning to love, to pardon, to pray, to suffer, and even to die for a truth that offered no repose save in heaven. The Church was passing through a state of transformation. Christianity was bursting the bonds in which it had so long been confined, and returning in life and vigor into a world that had forgotten its ancient power. The hand that made the world was turned towards it again; and the Gospel, reappearing in the midst of the nations, accelerated its course, notwithstanding the violent and repeated efforts of priests and kings; like the ocean which, when the hand of God presses on its surface, rises calm and majestic along its shores, so that no human power is able to resist its progress.

BOOK X—Agitation, Reverses, and Progress 1522—1526

CHAPTER 1

Political Element—Want of Enthusiasm at Rome—Siege of Pampeluna—Courage of Ignatius—Transition—Luther and Loyola—Visions—Two Principles

The Reformation, which at first had existed in the hearts of a few pious men, had entered into the worship and the life of the Church; it was natural that it would take a new step, and penetrate into civil relationships and the life of nations. Its progress was always from the interior to the exterior. We are about to see this great revolution taking possession of the political life of the world.

For eight centuries past, Europe had formed one vast sacerdotal state. Emperors and kings had been under the patronage of popes. Whenever any energetic resistance had been offered to her audacious pretensions, particularly in Germany and France, Rome eventually had the upperhand, and princes, docile agents of her terrible decrees, had been seen fighting to secure her dominion against private believers obedient to their rule, and profusely shedding in her behalf the blood of their people's children.

No injury could be inflicted on this vast ecclesiastical state, of which the pope was the head, without affecting the political relations. Two great ideas then agitated Germany. On the one hand, a desire for a revival of faith; and on the other, a longing for a national government, in which the German states might be represented, and thus serve as a counterpoise to the power of the emperors.

The Elector Frederick had insisted on this latter point at the election of Maximilian's successor; and the youthful Charles had complied. A national government had been framed in consequence, consisting of the imperial governor and representatives of the electors and circles. Thus Luther reformed the Church, and Frederick of Saxony reformed the State.

But while, simultaneously with the religious reform, important political modifications were introduced by the leaders of the nation, it was to be feared that the commonalty would also put itself in motion, and by its excesses, both in politics and religion, compromise both reforms. This violent and fanatical intrusion of the people and of certain ringleaders, which seems inevitable where society is shaken and in a state of transition, did not fail to take place in Germany at the period of which we are now treating.

There were other circumstances also that contributed to give rise to such disorders. The emperor and the pope had combined against the Reformation, and it seemed on the point of falling beneath the blows of two such powerful enemies. Policy, ambition, and interest compelled Charles V and Leo X to attempt its destruction. But these are poor champions to contend against the truth. Devotedness to a cause which is looked upon as sacred can only be conquered by a similar devotedness. But the Romans, yielding to the impulses of a Leo X, were enthusiastic about a sonnet or a melody, and insensible to the religion of Jesus Christ; and if any less futile thought came across their minds, instead of purifying and tempering their hearts anew in the Christianity of the apostles, they were busied with alliances, wars, conquests, and treaties, which gained new provinces, and with cold disdain left the Reformation to awaken on all sides a religious enthusiasm, and to march triumphantly to more noble conquests. [352] The enemy that had been doomed to destruction in the cathedral of Worms, reappeared full of confidence and strength; the contest must be severe; and blood must flow.

Yet some of the most imminent dangers that threatened the Reformation seemed at this time to be disappearing. Shortly before the publication of the edict of Worms, the youthful Charles, standing one day at a window of his palace with his confessor, had said, it is true, as he laid his hand on his heart: "I swear to hang up at this very window the first man who shall declare himself a Lutheran after the publication of my edict." But it was not long before his zeal abated considerably. His project for reviving the ancient glory of the holy empire, that is to say, of increasing his own power, had been coldly received. Dissatisfied with Germany, he left the banks of the Rhine, repaired to the Netherlands, and availed himself of his residence there to afford the monks those gratifications that he found himself unable to give them in the empire. Luther's works were burnt at Ghent by the hangman with all possible solemnity. More than fifty thousand spectators were present at this auto-da-fe; the emperor himself looking with an approving smile. He thence proceeded to Spain, where wars and internal dissensions compelled him, for a time at least, to leave Germany at peace. Since he is refused in the empire the power to which he lays claim, let others hunt down the heretic of Wittenberg. More anxious thoughts engrossed all his attention.

In effect, Francis I, impatient to try his strength with his rival, had thrown down the gauntlet. Under the pretence of restoring the children of Jean d'Albret, king of Navarre, to their patrimony, he had begun a bloody struggle, destined to last all his life, by invading that kingdom with an army under the command of Lesparre, whose rapid conquests were only checked by the fortress of Pampeluna.

On these strong walls an enthusiasm was kindled, destined afterwards to oppose the enthusiasm of the reformer, and to breathe into the papacy a new spirit of energy, devotedness, and authority. Pampeluna was destined to be the cradle, as it were, of the rival of the Wittenberg monk.

The chivalrous spirit that had so long animated the christian world survived in Spain alone. The wars against the Moors, scarcely terminated in the Peninsula, and continually breaking out in Africa, with distant and adventurous expeditions beyond the seas, fostered in the Castilian youths that enthusiastic and unaffected valor of which Amadis formed the ideal model. Among the defenders of Pampeluna was a young gentleman, Inigo Lopez of Recalda, the youngest of a family of thirteen children. Recalda, better known as Ignatius Loyola, had been brought up in the court of Ferdinand the Catholic. His person was graceful; he was expert in handling the sword and the lance, and ardently desired the glory of chivalry. To array himself in glittering arms, to ride a noble steed, to expose himself to the brilliant dangers of the tournament, to engage in hazardous exploits, to share in the envenomed struggles of faction, and to display as much devotion for Saint Peter as for his lady-love—such was the life of this young chevalier.

The governor of Navarre having gone into Spain to procure succors, had left the defense of Pampeluna to Inigo and a few nobles. The latter, perceiving the superiority of the French troops, resolved to withdraw. Inigo conjured them to make a stand against Lesparre; finding them resolute in their intention, he looked at them with indignation, accusing them of cowardice and perfidy; he then flung himself alone into the citadel, determined to hold it at the peril of his life.

The French, who were enthusiastically received into Pampeluna, having proposed a capitulation to the commander of the fortress: "Let us suffer everything," said Inigo impetuously to his companions, "rather than surrender." Upon this the French began to batter the walls with their powerful machines, and soon attempted an assault. Inigo's courage and exhortations inspirited the Spaniards; they repelled the assailants with arrows, swords, and battle-axes; Inigo fought at their head: standing on the ramparts, his eyes glistening with rage, the young cavalier brandished his sword, and the enemy fell beneath his blows. Suddenly a ball struck the wall which he was defending; a splinter from the stone wounded him severely in the right leg, and the ball recoiling with the violence of the blow, broke his left leg. Inigo fell senseless. The garrison surrendered immediately; and the French, admiring the courage of their youthful opponent, conveyed him in a litter to his parents in the castle of Loyola. In this lordly mansion, from which he afterwards derived his name,

Inigo had been born, eight years after Luther, of one of the most illustrious families of that district.

A painful operation had become necessary. Under the most acute [353] sufferings, Inigo firmly clenched his hands, but did not utter a single groan. Confined to a wearisome inactivity, he found it necessary to employ his active imagination. In the absence of the romances of chivalry, which had hitherto been his only mental food, he took up the life of Jesus Christ, and the legends of Flowers of the Saints. This kind of reading, in his state of solitude and sickness, produced an extraordinary impression on his mind. The noisy life of tournaments and battles, which had hitherto exclusively occupied his thoughts, appeared to recede, to fade and vanish from his sight; and at the same time a more glorious career seemed opening before his astonished eyes.

The humble actions of the saints and their heroic sufferings appeared far more worthy of praise than all the high feats of arms and chivalry. Stretched upon his bed, a prey to fever, he yielded to the most opposite thoughts. The world that he was forsaking, the world whose holy mortifications lay before him, appeared together, the one with its pleasures, the other with its austerities; and these two worlds contended in deadly struggle within his bosom. "What if I were to act like St. Francis or St. Dominick?" said he. Then the image of the lady to whom he had pledged his heart rose before him: "She is not a countess," exclaimed he with artless vanity, "nor a duchess; but her condition is much loftier than either." Such thoughts as these filled him with distress and ennui, while his plan of imitating the saints inspired him with peace and joy.

From this period his choice was made. As soon as his health was restored, he determined to bid adieu to the world. After having, like Luther, shared in one more repast with his old companions in arms, he departed alone, in great secrecy, for the solitary dwellings that the hermits of St. Benedict had hewn out of the rocks of Montserrat. Impelled not by a sense of sin or his need of Divine grace, but by a desire to become a "knight of the Virgin," and of obtaining renown by mortifications and pious works, after the example of the whole army of saints, he confessed for three days together, gave his rich attire to a beggar, put on sackcloth, and girt himself with a rope. Then, remembering the celebrated armed vigils of Amadis of Gaul, he suspended his sword before an image of Mary, passed the night in watching in his new and strange costume, and sometimes on his knees, sometimes upright, but always in prayer and with the pilgrim's staff in his hand, he repeated all the devout practices that the illustrious Amadis had observed before him. "It was thus," says his biographer, the Jesuit Maffei, "that while Satan was arming Luther against all laws human and divine, and while that infamous heresiarch appeared at Worms, and

impiously declared war against the apostolic see, Christ, by a call from his heavenly providence, was awakening this new champion, and binding him, and those who were to follow in his steps, to the service of the Roman pontiff, and opposing him to the licentiousness and fury of heretical depravity." Loyola, although still lame in one of his legs, dragged himself by winding and lonely paths to Manresa, where he entered a Dominican convent, in order to devote himself in this secluded spot to the severest mortifications. Like Luther, he daily begged his bread from door to door. He passed seven hours upon his knees, and scourged himself three times a day; at midnight he rose to pray; he allowed his hair and nails to grow, and in the thin pale face of the monk of Manresa it would have been impossible to recognise the young and brilliant knight of Pampeluna.

Yet the hour had come when religious ideas, which hitherto had been to Inigo a mere chivalrous amusement, were to be evolved in him with greater depth, and make him sensible of a power to which he was as yet a stranger. Suddenly, without anything to give him warning, the joy he had felt disappeared. In vain he had recourse to prayer and singing hymns; he could find no rest. His imagination had ceased to call up pleasing illusions; he was left alone with his conscience. A state so new to him was beyond his comprehension, and he fearfully asked himself whether God, after all the sacrifices he had made, was still angry with him. Night and day gloomy terrors agitated his soul; he shed bitter tears; with loud cries he called for the peace of mind which he had lost but all was in vain. He then recommenced the long confession he had made at Montserrat. "Perhaps," thought he, "I have forgotten something." But this confession only increased his anguish, for it reminded him of all his errors. He wandered about gloomy and dejected; his conscience accused him of having done nothing all his life but add sin to sin; and the wretched man, a prey to overwhelming terrors, [354] filled the cloister with his groans.

Strange thoughts then entered into his heart. Finding no consolation in confession or in the various ordinances of the Church, he began, like Luther, to doubt their efficacy. But instead of forsaking the works of men, and seeking the all-sufficient work of Christ, he asked himself whether he should not again pursue the pleasures of time. His soul sprang eagerly towards the delights of the world he had renounced, but immediately recoiled with affright.

Was there, at that time, any difference between the monk of Manresa and the monk of Erfurth? Unquestionably,—in secondary points: but the state of their souls was the same. Both were deeply sensible of the multitude of their sins. Both were seeking for reconciliation with God, and longed to have the assurance in their hearts. If a Staupitz with the Bible in his hand had appeared in the convent of Manresa,

possibly Inigo might have become Luther of the Peninsula. These two great men of the sixteenth century, these founders of two spiritual powers which for three centuries have been warring together, were at this moment brothers; and perhaps, if they had met, Luther and Loyola would have embraced, and mingled their tears and their prayers.

But from this hour the two monks were destined to follow entirely different paths. Inigo, instead of feeling that his remorse was sent to drive him to the foot of the cross, persuaded himself that these inward reproaches proceeded not from God, but from the devil; and he resolved never more to think of his sins, to erase them from him memory, and bury them in eternal oblivion. Luther turned towards Christ, Loyola only fell back upon himself.

Visions came erelong to confirm Inigo in the conviction at which he had arrived. His own resolves had become a substitute for the grace of the Lord; his own imaginings supplied the place of God's Word. He had looked upon the voice of God in his conscience as the voice of the devil; and accordingly the remainder of his history represents him as given up to the inspirations of the spirit of darkness. One day Loyola met an old woman, as Luther in the hour of his trial was visited by an old man. But the Spanish woman, instead of proclaiming remission of sins to the penitent of Manresa, predicted visitations from Jesus. Such was the Christianity to which Loyola, like the prophet of Zwickau, had recourse. Inigo did not seek truth in the Holy Scriptures; but imagined in their place immediate communication with the world of spirits. He soon lived entirely in ecstasies and contemplation.

One day, as he was going to the church of St. Paul, outside the city, he walked along the banks of the Llobregat, and sat down absorbed in meditation. His eyes were fixed on the river, which rolled its deep waters silently before him. He was lost in thought. Suddenly he fell into ecstasy: he saw with his bodily eyes what men can with difficulty understand after much reading, long vigils, and study. He rose, and as he stood on the brink of the river, he appeared to have become another man; he then knelt down at the foot of the cross which was close at hand, and prepared to sacrifice his life in the service of that cause whose mysteries had just been revealed to him.

From this time his visions became more frequent. Sitting one day on the steps of St. Dominick's church at Manresa, he was singing a hymn to the Holy Virgin, when on a sudden his soul was wrapt in ecstasy; he remained motionless, absorbed in contemplation; the mystery of the most Holy Trinity was revealed to his sight under magnificent symbols; he shed tears, filled the church with his sobs, and all day long continued speaking of this ineffable vision.

These numerous apparitions had removed all doubts; he believed, not like Luther because the things of faith were written in the Word of God, but because of the visions he had seen. "Even had there been no Bible," say his apologists, "even had these mysteries never been revealed in Scripture, he would have believed them, for God had appeared to him." Luther, on taking his doctor's degree, had pledged his oath to Holy Scripture, and the only infallible authority of the Word of God had become the fundamental principle of the Reformation. Loyola, at this time, bound himself to dreams and visions; and chimerical apparitions became the principle of his life and of his faith.

Luther's sojourn in the convent of Erfurth and that of Loyola in the convent of Manresa explain to us—the first, the Reformation; the latter, modern Popery. The monk who was to reanimate the exhausted vigor of Rome repaired to Jerusalem after quitting the cloister. We will not follow him on this pilgrimage, as we shall meet with him again in the course of this history.

CHAPTER 2

Victory of the Pope—Death of Leo X—The Oratory of Divine Love—Adrian VI—Plan of Reform—Opposition

While these events were taking place in Spain, Rome herself appeared to be assuming a more serious character. The great patron of music, hunting, and festivities disappeared from the pontifical throne, and was succeeded by a pious and grave monk.

Leo X had been greatly delighted at hearing of the edict of Worms and Luther's captivity; and immediately, in testimony of his victory, he had consigned the effigy and writings of the reformer to the flames. It was the second or third time that Rome had indulged in this innocent pleasure. At the same time Leo X, wishing to testify his gratitude to Charles V, united his army with the emperor's. The French were compelled to evacuate Parma, Piacenza, and Milan; and Giulio de Medici, the pope's cousin, entered the latter city. The pope was thus approaching the summit of human power.

These events took place at the beginning of winter 1521. Leo X was accustomed to spend the autumn in the country. At such times he would leave Rome without surplice, and, what was considered still more scandalous, wearing boots. At Viterbo he amused himself with hawking; at Corneti in hunting the stag: the lake of Bolsena afforded him the pleasure of fishing; thence he passed to his favourite villa at Malliana, where he spent his time in the midst of festivities. Musicians, improvisatori, and all the artists whose talents could enliven this delightful abode, were gathered round the pontiff. He was residing there when he received intelligence of the capture of Milan. A great agitation immediately ensued in the villa. The courtiers and officers could not restrain their exultation, the Swiss discharged their carbines, and Leo, in excess joy, walked up and down his room all night, from time to time looking out of the window at the rejoicings of the soldiers and of the people. He returned to Rome, fatigued but intoxicated with success. He had scarcely arrived at the Vatican when he felt suddenly indisposed. "Pray for me," said he to his attendants. He had not even time to receive the holy sacrament, and died in the prime of life, at the age of forty-five, in the hour of victory, and amid the noise of rejoicing.

The crowd followed the pontiff to the grave, loading him with abuse. They could not forgive him for having died without the sacrament and for leaving his debts unpaid, the result of his enormous expenses. "You gained your pontificate like a fox," said the Romans; "you held it like a lion, and left it like a dog." Such was the funeral

oration with which Rome honoured the pope who excommunicated the Reformation, and whose name serves to designate one of the great epochs in history.

Meantime a feeble reaction against the spirit of Leo and of Rome was already beginning in Rome itself. Some pious men had there established an oratory for their common edification, near the spot which tradition assigns as the place where the early Christians used to meet. Contarini, who had heard Luther at Worms, was the leader in these prayer-meetings. Thus a species of reformation was beginning at Rome almost at the same time as at Wittenberg. It has been said with truth, that wherever the seeds of piety exist, there also are the germs of reformation. But these good intentions were soon to be frustrated.

In other times, a Gregory VII or an Innocent III would have been chosen to succeed Leo X, could such men have been found; but the interest of the Empire was now superior to that of the Church, and Charles V required a pope devoted to his service. The Cardinal de Medici, afterwards Clement VII, seeing that he had no chance at present of obtaining the tiara, exclaimed: "Elect the Cardinal of Tortosa, a man in years, and whom every one regards as a saint." This prelate, who was a native of Utrecht, and sprung from the middle classes, was chosen, and reigned under the title of Adrian VI. He had been professor at Louvain, and afterwards tutor to Charles V, by whose influence he was invested with the Roman purple in 1517.

Cardinal de Vio supported his nomination. "Adrian," said he, "had a great share in Luther's condemnation by the Louvain doctors." The cardinals, tired out and taken by surprise, elected this foreigner; but as soon as they came to their senses (says a chronicler), they almost died of fright. The thought that the austere Netherlander would not accept the tiara gave them some little consolation at first; but this hope was not of long duration. Pasquin represented the pontiff-elect under the character of a schoolmaster, and the cardinals as little boys under the rod. The citizens were so exasperated that the members of the conclave thought themselves fortunate to have escaped being thrown into the river. In Holland, on the contrary, the people testified by general rejoicings their delight at giving a pope to the Church. "Utrecht planted; Louvain watered; the Emperor gave the increase," was the inscription on the hangings suspended from the fronts of the houses. A wag wrote below these words: "And God had nothing to do with it."

Notwithstanding the dissatisfaction at first manifested by the people of Rome, Adrian VI repaired to that city in the month of August 1522, and was well received. It was reported that he had more than five thousand benefices in his gift, and every man reckoned on having his share. For many years the papal throne had not been

filled by such a pontiff. Just, active, learned, pious, sincere, and of irreproachable morals, he permitted himself to be blinded neither by favour nor passion.

He followed the middle course traced out by Erasmus, and in a book reprinted at Rome during his pontificate, he said: "It is certain that the pope may err in matters of faith, in defending heresy by his opinions or decretals." This is indeed a remarkable assertion for a pope to make; and if the ultra-montanists reply that Adrian was mistaken on this point, by this very circumstance they affirm what they deny, viz. the fallibility of the popes.

Adrian arrived at the Vatican with his old housekeeper, whom he charged to continue providing frugally for his moderate wants in the magnificent palace which Leo X had filled with luxury and dissipation. He had not a single taste in common with his predecessor. When he was shown the magnificent group of Laocoon, discovered a few years before, and purchased at an enormous price by Julius II, he turned coldly away, observing: "They are the idols of the heathen!" "I would rather serve God," said he, "in my deanery of Louvain, than be pope at Rome." Alarmed at the dangers with which the Reformation threatened the religion of the Middle Ages, and not, like the Italians, at those to which Rome and her hierarchy were exposed, it was his earnest desire to combat and check it; and he judged the best means to this end would be a reform of the Church carried out by the Church itself. "The Church needs a reform," said he; "but we must go step by step."—"The pope means," says Luther, "that a few centuries should intervene between each step." In truth, for ages the Church had been moving towards a reformation. But there was no longer room for temporizing: it was necessary to act.

Faithful to his plan, Adrian set about banishing from the city all perjurers, profane persons, and usurers; a task by no means easy, since they formed a considerable portion of the inhabitants. At first the Romans ridiculed him; soon they began to hate him. The sacerdotal rule, the immense profits it brought, the power of Rome, the sports, festivals, and luxury that filled it,—all would be irretrievably lost, if there was a return to apostolic manners.

The restoration of discipline, in particular, met with a strong opposition. "To succeed in this," said the cardinal high-penitentiary, "we must first revive the zeal of Christians. The remedy is more than the patient can bear, and will cause his death. Beware lest, by wishing to preserve Germany, you should lose Italy." In effect, Adrian had soon greater cause to fear Romanism than Lutheranism itself.

Exertions were made to bring him back into the path he was desirous of quitting. The old and crafty Cardinal Soderini of Volterra, the familiar friend of Alexander VI, Julius II, and Leo X, often let fall hints well adapted to prepare the worthy Adrian for that character, so strange to him, which he was called upon to fill. "The heretics," remarked Soderini one day, "have in all ages spoken of the corrupt manners of the court of Rome, and yet the popes have never changed them."—"It has never been by reforms," said he on another occasion, "that heresies have been put down, but by crusades."—"Alas," replied the pontiff with a deep sigh, "how unhappy is the fate of a pope, since he has not even liberty to do what is right!"

CHAPTER 3

Diet of Nuremberg—Soliman's Invasion—The Nuncio calls for Luther's Death—The Nuremberg Preachers—Promise of Reform—Grievances of the Nation—Decree of the Diet—Fulminating Letter of the Pope—Luther's Advice

On the 23rd March 1522, before Adrian had reached Rome, the diet assembled at Nuremberg. Prior to this date the Bishops of Mersburg and Misnia had asked permission of the Elector of Saxony to make a visitation of the convents and churches in his states. Frederick, thinking that truth would be strong enough to resist error, had given a favourable reply to this request, and the visitation took place. The bishops and their doctors preached violently against the Reformation, exhorting, threatening, and entreating; but their arguments seemed useless; and when, desirous of having recourse to more effectual weapons, they called upon the secular authority to carry out their decrees, the elector's ministers replied, that the business was one that required to be examined according to the Bible, and that the elector in his advanced age could not begin to study divinity. These efforts of the bishops did not lead one soul back to the fold of Rome; and Luther, who passed through these districts shortly after, and preached in his usual powerful strain, erased the feeble impressions that had been here and there produced.

It might be feared that the emperor's brother, the Archduke Ferdinand, would do what Frederick had refused. This young prince, who presided during part of the sittings of the diet, gradually acquiring more firmness, might in his zeal rashly draw the sword which his more prudent and politic brother wisely left in the scabbard. In fact, he had already begun a cruel persecution of the partisans of the Reformation in his hereditary states of Austria. But God on several occasions made use of the same instrument for the deliverance of reviving Christianity that he had employed in the destruction of corrupt Christianity. The crescent appeared in the terrified provinces of Hungary. On the 9th of August, after a six weeks' siege, Belgrade, the bulwark of this kingdom and of the empire, fell before Soliman's attack. The followers of Mahomet, after having evacuated Spain, seemed bent on entering Europe by the east. The Diet of Nuremberg forgot the monk of Worms, to think only of the Sultan of Constantinople. But Charles V kept both these adversaries in mind. On the 31st of October, he wrote to the pope from Valladolid: "We must check the Turks, and punish the abettors of Luther's poisonous doctrines with the sword."

The storm which seemed to be passing away from the Reformation, and turning towards the east, soon gathered anew over the head of the reformer. His return to Wittenberg, and the zeal he had there displayed, rekindled animosity. "Now that we

know where to catch him," said Duke George, "let us execute the decree of Worms!" It was even asserted in Germany that Charles V and Adrian would meet at Nuremberg to concert their plans. "Satan feels the wound that has been inflicted on him," says Luther; "and this is why he is so furious. But Christ has already stretched out his hand, and will soon trample him under foot in spite of the gates of hell."

In the month of December 1522, the diet again assembled at Nuremberg. Everything seemed to indicate, that if Soliman had been the great enemy that had engaged its attention in the spring session, Luther would be that of the winter meeting. Adrian VI, in consequence of his German descent, flattered himself with the hope of a more favourable reception from his nation than any pope of Italian origin could expect. He therefore commissioned Chieregati, whom he had known in Spain, to repair to Nuremberg.

As soon as the diet had opened, several princes spoke strongly against Luther. The Cardinal-archbishop of Salzburg, who enjoyed the full confidence of the emperor, desired that prompt and decisive measures should be taken before the arrival of the Elector of Saxony. The Elector Joachim of Brandenburg, always decided in his proceedings, and the Chancellor of Treves, alike pressed for the execution of the edict of Worms. The other princes were in a great measure undecided and divided in opinion. The state of confusion in which the Church was placed filled its most faithful servants with anguish. The Bishop of Strasburg exclaimed, in a full meeting of the diet, "I would give one of my fingers not to be a priest."

Chieregati, jointly with the Cardinal of Salzburg, called for Luther's death. "We must," said he in the pope's name, and holding the pontiff's brief in his hands, "we must cut off this gangrened member from the body. Your fathers put John Huss and Jerome of Prague to death at Constance; but they live again in Luther. Follow the glorious example of your ancestors, and, with the aid of God and St. Peter, gain a signal victory over the infernal dragon."

On hearing the brief of the pious and moderate Adrian, most of the princes were awe-stricken. Many were beginning to understand Luther better, and had hoped better things of the pope. Thus then Rome, under an Adrian, will not acknowledge her faults; she still hurls her thunderbolts, and the provinces of Germany are about to be laid waste and drowned in blood. While the princes remained sad and silent, the prelates and members of the diet in the interest of Rome became tumultuous. "Let him be put to death," cried they, according to the report of the Saxon envoy, who was present at the sitting.

Very different language was heard in the churches of Nuremberg. The people crowded into the chapel attached to the hospital, and to the churches of the Augustines, of St. Sebaldus, and St. Lawrence, to listen to the preaching of the Gospel. Andrew Osiander was preaching powerfully in the latter temple. Several princes, and especially Albert, margrave of Brandenburg, who, in his quality of grand-master of the Teutonic Order, took rank immediately after the archbishops, went there frequently. Monks, leaving the convents in the city, were learning trades in order to gain a livelihood by their labour.

Chieregati could not endure so much boldness. He insisted that the priests and rebellious monks should be thrown into prison. The diet, notwithstanding the resolute opposition of the envoys of the Elector of Saxony and of the Margrave Casimir, determined on seizing the monks, but consented to make a previous communication of the nuncio's complaint to Osiander and his colleagues. A committee, of which the fanatical Cardinal of Salzburg was president, was intrusted with this duty. The danger was threatening; the struggle was about to begin, and it was the council of the nation that provoked it. The people, however, anticipated them.While the diet was deliberating what should be done with these ministers, the towncouncil of Nuremberg were considering how they should proceed with regard to the decision of the diet.They resolved, without exceeding their jurisdiction, that if attempts were made to lay violent hands on the city preachers, they should be set at liberty by main force. Such a determination was very significant. The astonished diet replied to the nuncio, that it was not lawful to arrest the preachers of the free city of Nuremberg, unless previously convicted of heresy. Chieregati was deeply moved at this new insult to the omnipotence of the papacy. "Well, then," said he haughtily to Ferdinand, "do nothing, but let me act. I will have these preachers seized in the pope's name." As soon as the Cardinal-archbishop Albert of Mentz and the Margrave Casimir were informed of this extravagant design, they hastened to the legate, entreating him to renounce his intentions. The nuncio was immovable, affirming that in the bosom of Christendom obedience to the pope was of the first importance. The two princes quitted the legate, saying: "If you persist in your design, we desire that you will give us warning; for we will leave the city before you venture to lay hands on these preachers." The legate abandoned his project.

Despairing of success by measures of authority, he resolved to have recourse to other expedients, and with this view he acquainted the diet with the intentions and mandates of the pontiff, which he had hitherto kept secret. But the worthy Adrian, a stranger to the ways of the world, injured by his very frankness the cause he so heartily desired to serve. "We are well aware," said he in the resolutions intrusted to his legate, "that for many years certain abuses and abominations have crept into the

holy city. The contagion has spread from the head to the members; it has descended from the popes to the other ecclesiastics. It is our desire to reform this Roman court, whence proceed so many evils; the whole world is craving after it, and to effect this we submitted to ascend the papal chair."

The partisans of Rome blushed for shame as they heard this extraordinary language. They thought, with Pallavicini, that these avowals were too sincere. The friends of the Reformation, on the contrary, were delighted at seeing Rome proclaim her own corruption. They no longer doubted that Luther was right, since the pope himself declared it.

The reply of the diet showed how much the authority of the sovereign pontiff had fallen in the empire. Luther's spirit seemed to have entered into the hearts of the representatives of the nation. The moment was favourable: Adrian's ear seemed open; the emperor was absent; the diet resolved to collect into one body all the grievances that for ages Germany had endured from Rome, and forward them to the pope.

The legate was frightened at this determination. He entreated and threatened in turns. He insinuated that under a purely religious exterior the reformer concealed great political dangers; he asserted, like Adrian, that these children of iniquity had no other end in view than to destroy all obedience, and lead every men to do as he pleased. "Will those men keep your laws," said he, "who not only despise the holy canons of the Father, but still further, tear them in pieces and burn them in their diabolical fury? Will they spare your lives who do not fear to insult, to strike, to kill the anointed of the Lord? It is your persons, your goods, your houses, your wives, your children, your domains, your states, your temples, and all that you adore, that are threatened by this frightful calamity."

All these declamations proved of no avail. The diet, although commending the promises of the pope, required for their speedy fulfillment that a free and christian council should be assembled as soon as possible at Strasburg, Mentz, Cologne, or Metz, in which laymen should be present. Laymen in a council! Laymen regulating the affairs of the Church in concert with priests! It is more than we can see even now in many protestant states. The diet added, that every man should have the liberty to speak freely for the glory of God, the salvation of souls, and the good of the christian commonwealth.

It then proceeded to draw up a catalogue of its grievances, which amounted to the number of eighty. The abuses and arts of the popes and the Roman court to extort money from Germany; the scandals and profanations of the clergy; the disorders and

simony of the ecclesiastical tribunals; the encroachments on the secular power for the enslaving of consciences; were all set forth with as much frankness as energy. The states gave the pope to understand that the traditions of men were the source of all this corruption, and concluded by saying: "If these grievances are not redressed within a limited time, we shall seek other means to escape from so many oppressions and sufferings." Chieregati, foreseeing the terrible recess that the diet would draw up, hastily left Nuremberg, that he might not have to deliver this sad and insolent message.

Yet was there reason to fear that the diet would seek to make amends for its boldness by sacrificing Luther? People thought so at first; but a spirit of justice and truth had descended on this assembly. It demanded, as Luther had done, the convocation of a free council in the empire, and added, that in the meanwhile the pure Gospel alone should be preached, and nothing should be printed without the approbation of a certain number of pious and learned men. These resolutions furnish us with the means of calculating the immense progress the Reformation had made subsequently to the Diet of Worms; and yet the knight of Feilitsch, the Saxon envoy, solemnly protested against this censorship, moderate as it was, which the diet prescribed. This decree was regarded as the first triumph of the Reformation, which would be followed by other more decisive victories. The Swiss themselves, in the midst of their mountains, thrilled with delight. "The Roman pontiff is vanquished in Germany," said Zwingle. "We have nothing more to do than deprive him of his weapons. This is the battle we have now to fight, and a furious one it will be. But Christ is the umpire of the conflict." Luther said publicly that God himself had inspired the princes to draw up this edict.

The indignation at the Vatican among the papal ministers was very great. What! is it not enough to have a pope who disappoints all the expectations of the Romans, and in whose palace there is neither singing nor playing; but, more than this, secular princes are allowed to hold the language that Rome detests, and refuse to put the Wittenberg heretic to death!

Adrian himself was filled with indignation at the events in Germany, and it was on the head of the Elector of Saxony that he discharged his anger. Never had the Roman pontiffs uttered a cry of alarm more energetic, more sincere, or perhaps more affecting.

"We have waited long—and perhaps too long," said the pious Adrian in the brief he addressed to the elector; "we were anxious to see whether God would visit thy soul, and if thou wouldst not at last escape from the snares of Satan. But when we looked

to gather grapes, we found nothing but sour grapes. The blower hath blown in vain; thy wickedness is not consumed. Open, then, thine eyes to see the greatness of thy fall!

"If the unity of the Church is broken; if the simple have been turned aside from that faith which they had imbibed at their mothers' breasts; if the temples are destroyed; if the people are without priests; if the priests receive not the honour that is due to them; if Christians are without Christ: to whom is it owing, but to thee? If christian peace has vanished from the earth; if the world is full of discord, rebellion, robbery, murder, and conflagration; if the cry of war is heard from east to west; if a universal conflict is at hand: it is thou— thou who art the author of these things!

"Sawest thou not this sacrilegious man (Luther) rending with his wicked hands and trampling under his impure feet the images of the saints and even the holy cross of Christ? Dost thou not behold him, in his ungodly wrath, instigating laymen to imbrue their hands in the blood of the priests, and overturning the churches of our Lord? "And what matters it, if the priests he assails are wicked priests?

Has not the Lord said: Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; thus showing the honour that belongs to them, even when their lives are blame-worthy.

"Rebellious apostate! he is not ashamed to defile the vessels consecrated to God; he drags from their sanctuaries the holy virgins consecrated to Christ, and gives them over to the devil; he takes the priests of the Lord, and delivers them up to infamous harlots Awful profanation! which even the heathen would have condemned with horror in the priests of their idols!

"What punishment, what martyrdom dost thou think we judge thee to deserve? Have pity on thyself; have pity on thy wretched Saxons; for if you do not all return into the fold, God will pour out his vengeance upon you.

"In the name of the Almighty God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose representative I am upon earth, I declare that thou shalt be punished in this world, and plunged into everlasting fire in that which is to come. Repent and be converted! Two swords are suspended over thy head,—the sword of the Empire and the sword of the Church."

The pious Frederick shuddered as he read this threatening brief. He had written to the emperor shortly before, to the effect that old age and sickness rendered him

incapable of taking any part in these affairs; and he had been answered by the most insolent letter that a sovereign prince had ever received. Although bowed down by age, he cast his eyes on that sword which he had worn at the holy sepulchre in the days of his manly strength. He began to think that he would have to unsheathe it in defense of the conscience of his subjects, and that, already on the brink of the tomb, he would not be allowed to go down in peace. He immediately wrote to Wittenberg to hear the opinion of the Fathers of the Reformation.

There also troubles and persecutions were apprehended. "What shall I say?" exclaimed the gentle Melancthon; "whither shall I turn? Hatred overwhelms us, and the world is transported with fury against us." Luther, Linck, Melancthon, Bugenhagen, and Amsdorff consulted together on the reply they should make to the elector. Their answer was almost entirely to the same purport, and the advice they gave him is very remarkable.

"No prince," said they, "can undertake a war without the consent of the people, from whose hands he has received his authority. Now, the people have no desire to fight for the Gospel, for they do not believe. Let not princes, therefore, take up arms; they are rulers of the nations, and therefore of unbelievers." Thus, it was the impetuous Luther who counselled the wise Frederick to restore his sword to its sheath. He could not have returned a better answer to the reproach of the pope, that he excited the laity to imbrue their hands in the blood of the clergy. Few characters have been more misunderstood than his. This advice was dated the 8th of February. Frederick restrained himself.

The pope's wrath soon bore fruit. The princes who had set forth their grievances against Rome, alarmed at their own daring, were now desirous of making amends by their compliance. Many, besides, thought that the victory would remain with the Roman pontiff, as he appeared to be the stronger party. "In our days," said Luther, "princes are content to say three times three make nine; or else, twice seven make fourteen: The reckoning is correct; the affair will succeed. Then our Lord God arises and says: How many do you reckon me? For a cipher perhaps? He then turns their calculations topsy-turvy, and their accounts prove false."

CHAPTER 4

Persecution—Exertions of Duke George—The Convent at Antwerp—Miltenberg—The Three Monks of Antwerp—The Scaffold—The Martyrs of Brussels

The torrent of fire poured forth by the humble and meek Adrian kindled a conflagration; and its flickering flames communicated an immense agitation to the whole of Christendom. The persecution, which had been for Sometime relaxed, broke out afresh. Luther trembled for Germany, and endeavoured to appease the storm. "If the princes," said he, "oppose the truth, the result will be a confusion that will destroy princes and magistrates, priests and people. I fear to see all Germany erelong deluged with blood. Let us rise up as a wall and preserve our people from the wrath of our God. Nations are not such now as they have hitherto been. The sword of civil war is impending over the heads of our kings. They are resolved to destroy Luther; but Luther is resolved to save them. Christ lives and reigns; and I shall live and reign with him."

These words produced no effect; Rome was hastening onward to scaffolds and bloodshed. The Reformation, like Jesus Christ, did not come to bring peace, but a sword. Persecution was necessary in God's purposes. As certain objects are hardened in the fire, to protect them from the influence of the atmosphere, so the fiery trial was intended to protect the evangelical truth from the influence of the world. But the fire did still more than this: it served, as in the primitive times of Christianity, to kindle in men's hearts a universal enthusiasm for a cause so furiously persecuted. When man begins to know the truth, he feels a holy indignation against injustice and violence. A heaven-descended instinct impels him to the side of the oppressed; and at the same time the faith of the martyrs exalts, wins, and leads him to that doctrine which imparts such courage and tranquillity.

Duke George took the lead in the persecution. But it was a little thing to carry it on in his own states only; he desired, above all, that [361] it should devastate electoral Saxony, that focus of heresy, and spared no labour to move the Elector Frederick and Duke John. "Merchants from Saxony," he wrote to them from Nuremberg, "relate strange things about that country, and such as are opposed to the honour of God and of the saints: they take the sacrament of the Lord's Supper with their hands! The bread and wine are consecrated in the language of the people; Christ's blood is put into common vessels; and at Eulenburg, a man to insult the priest entered the church riding on an ass! Accordingly, what is the consequence? The mines with which God has enriched Saxony have failed since the innovating sermons of Luther. Would to God that those who boast of having uplifted the Gospel in the electorate had rather

carried it to Constantinople. Luther's strain is sweet and pleasing, but there is a poisoned tail, that stings like that of the scorpion. Let us now prepare for the conflict! Let us imprison these apostate monks and impious priests; and that too without delay, for our hair is turning gray as well as our beards, and shows us that we have but a short time left for action."

Thus wrote Duke George to the elector. The latter replied firmly but mildly, that anyone who committed a crime in his states would meet with due punishment; but that for what concerned the conscience, such things must be left to God. George, unable to persuade Frederick, hastened to persecute the followers of the work he detested. He imprisoned the monks and priests who followed Luther; he recalled the students belonging to his states from the universities which the Reformation had reached; and ordered that all the copies of the New Testament in the vulgar tongue should be given up to the magistrates. The same measures were enforced in Austria, Wurtemberg, and the duchy of Brunswick.

But it was in the Low Countries, under the immediate authority of Charles V, that the persecution broke out with greatest violence. The Augustine convent at Antwerp was filled with monks who had welcomed the truths of the Gospel. Many of the brethren had passed Sometime at Wittenberg, and since 1519, salvation by grace had been preached in their church with great energy. The prior, James Probst, a man of ardent temperament, and Melchior Mirisch, who was remarkable, on the other hand, for his ability and prudence, were arrested and taken to Brussels about the close of the year 1521. They were brought before Aleander, Glapio, and several other prelates. Taken by surprise, confounded, and alarmed, Probst retracted. Melchior Mirisch found means to pacify his judges; he escaped both from recantation and condemnation.

These persecutions did not alarm the monks who remained in the convent at Antwerp. They continued to preach the Gospel with power. The people crowded to hear them, and the church of the Augustines in that city was found too small, as had been the case with the one at Wittenberg. In October 1522, the storm that was muttering over their heads burst forth; the convent was closed, and the monks thrown into prison and condemned to death. A few of them managed to escape. Some women, forgetting the timidity of their sex, dragged one of them (Henry Zuphten) from the hands of the executioners. Three young monks, Henry Voes, John Esch, and Lambert Thorn, escaped for a time the search of the inquisitors. All the sacred vessels of the convent were sold; the gates were barricaded; the holy sacrament was removed, as if from a polluted spot; Margaret, the governor of the Low Countries, solemnly received it into the church of the Holy Virgin; orders were given that not one stone should be

left upon another of that heretical monastery; and many citizens and women who had joyfully listened to the Gospel were thrown into prison.

Luther was filled with sorrow on hearing this news. "The cause that we defend," said he, "is no longer a mere game; it will have blood, it calls for our lives." Mirisch and Probst were to meet with very different fates. The prudent Mirisch soon became the docile instrument of Rome, and the agent of the imperial decrees against the partisans of the Reformation. Probst, on the contrary, having escaped from the hands of the inquisitors, wept over his backsliding; he retracted his retraction, and boldly preached at Bruges in Flanders the doctrines he had abjured. Being again arrested and thrown into prison at Brussels, his death seemed inevitable. A Franciscan took pity on him, and assisted his escape; and Probst, "preserved by a miracle of God," says Luther, reached Wittenberg, where his twofold deliverance filled the hearts of the friends to the Reformation with joy.

On all sides the Roman priests were under arms. The city of Miltenberg on the Maine, which belonged to the Archbishop of Mentz, was one of the German towns that had received the Word of God with [362] the greatest eagerness. The inhabitants were much attached to their pastor John Draco, one of the most enlightened men of his times. He was compelled to leave the city; but the Roman ecclesiastics were frightened, and withdrew at the same time, fearing the vengeance of the people. One evangelical deacon alone remained to comfort their hearts. At the same time troops from Mentz marched into the city and they spread through the streets, uttering blasphemies, brandishing their swords, and giving themselves up to debauchery. Some evangelical Christians fell beneath their blows; others were seized and thrown into dungeons; the Romish rites were restored; the reading of the Bible was prohibited; and the inhabitants were forbidden to speak of the Gospel, even in the most private meetings. On the entrance of the troops, the deacon had taken refuge in the house of a poor widow. He was denounced to their commanders, who sent a soldier to apprehend him. The humble deacon, hearing the hasty steps of the soldier who sought his life, quietly waited for him, and just as the door of the chamber was opened abruptly, he went forward meekly, and cordially embracing him, said: "I welcome thee, brother; here I am; plunge thy sword into my bosom." The fierce soldier, in astonishment, let his sword fall from his hands, and protected the pious evangelist from any further harm.

Meantime, the inquisitors of the Low Countries, thirsting for blood, scoured the country, searching everywhere for the young Augustines who had escaped from the Antwerp persecution. Esch, Voes, and Lambert were at last discovered, put in chains, and led to Brussels. Egmondanus, Hochstraten, and several other inquisitors,

summoned them into their presence. "Do you retract your assertion," asked Hochstraten, "that the priest has not the power to forgive sins, and that it belongs to God alone?" He then proceeded to enumerate other evangelical doctrines which they were called upon to abjure. "No! we will retract nothing," exclaimed Esch and Voes firmly; "we will not deny the Word of God; we will rather die for the faith."

The Inquisitor.—"Confess that you have been seduced by Luther."

The Young Augustines.—"As the apostles were seduced by Jesus Christ."

The Inquisitors.—"We declare you to be heretics, worthy of being burnt alive, and we give you over to the secular arm."

Lambert kept silence; the prospect of death terrified him; distress and doubt tormented his soul. "I beg four days," said he with a stifled voice. He was led back to prison. As soon as this delay had expired, Esch and Voes were solemnly deprived of their sacerdotal character, and given over to the council of the governor of the Low Countries. The council delivered them, fettered, to the executioner. Hochstraten and three other inquisitors accompanied them to the stake.

When they came near the scaffold the youthful martyrs looked at it calmly; their firmness, their piety, their age, drew tears even from the inquisitors. When they were bound, the confessors approached them: "Once more we ask you if you will receive the christian faith."

The Martyrs.—"We believe in the Christian Church, but not in your Church."

Half an hour elapsed: the inquisitors hesitated, and hoped that the prospect of so terrible a death would intimidate these youths. But alone tranquil in the midst of the turbulent crowd in the square, they sang psalms, stopping from time to time to declare boldly: "We will die for the name of Jesus Christ."

"Be converted—be converted," cried the inquisitors, "or you will die in the name of the devil."—"No," replied the martyrs, "we will die like Christians, and for the truth of the Gospel."

The pile was lighted. While the flames were ascending slowly, a heavenly peace filled their hearts, and one of them went so far as to say: "I seem to be lying on a bed of roses." The solemn hour was come; death was near: the two martyrs cried with a loud voice: "O Domine Jesu! Fili David! miserere nostri! O Lord Jesus, Son of David,

have mercy on us!" They began solemnly to repeat the Apostle's Creed. At last the flames reached them, burning the cords that fastened them to the stake, before their breath was gone. One of them, taking advantage of this liberty fell on his knees in the midst of the fire, and thus worshipping his Master, exclaimed, clasping his hands: "Lord Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us!" The flames now surrounded their bodies: they sang the Te Deum; soon their voices stifled, and nothing but their ashes remained.

This execution had lasted four hours. It was on the 1st of July 1523 that the first martyrs of the Reformation thus laid down their lives for the Gospel.

All good men shuddered when they heard of it. The future filled them with the keenest apprehension. "The executions have begun," said Erasmus.—"At last," exclaimed Luther, "Christ is gathering [363] some fruits of our preaching, and has created new martyrs."

But the joy Luther felt at the constancy of these two young Christians was troubled by the thought of Lambert. The latter was the most learned of the three; he had succeeded to Probst's station as preacher at Antwerp. Agitated in his dungeon, and alarmed at the prospect of death, he was still more terrified by his conscience, which reproached him with cowardice, and urged him to confess the Gospel. He was soon delivered from his fears, and after boldly proclaiming the truth, died like his brethren.

A rich harvest sprang from the blood of these martyrs. Brussels turned towards the Gospel. "Wherever Aleander raises a pile," said Erasmus, "there he seems to have been sowing heretics."

"Your bonds are mine," said Luther; "your dungeons and your burning piles are mine! We are all with you, and the Lord is at our head!" He then commemorated the death of these young monks in a beautiful hymn, and soon, in Germany and in the Netherlands, in city and country, these strains were heard communicating in every direction an enthusiasm for the faith of these martyrs. No! no! their ashes shall not die! But, borne to every land, Where'er their sainted dust shall fall Up springs a holy band. Though Satan by his might may kill, And stop their powerful voice, They triumph o'er him in their death, And still in Christ rejoice.

CHAPTER 5

The New Pope, Clement VII—The Legate Campeggio—Diet of Nuremberg—Demand of the Legate—Reply of the Diet—A Secular Council projected—Alarm and Exertions of the Pope—Bavaria—League of Ratisbon—Severity and Reforms—Political Schism—Opposition—Intrigues of Rome—Decree of Burgos—Rupture

Adrian would doubtless have persisted in these violent measures; the inutility of his exertions to arrest the reform, his orthodoxy, his zeal, his austerity, and even his conscientiousness, would have made him a cruel persecutor. But this Providence did not permit. He died on the 14th of September 1523, and the Romans, overjoyed at being delivered from this stern foreigner, crowned his physicians's door with flowers, and wrote this inscription over it: "To the saviour of his country."

Giulio de Medici, cousin to Leo X, succeeded Adrian VI, under the name of Clement VII. From the day of his election there was no more question of religious reform. The new pope, like many of his predecessors, thought only of upholding the privileges of the papacy, and of employing its resources for his own aggrandizement.

Anxious to repair Adrian's blunders, Clement sent to Nuremberg a legate of his own character, one of the most skilful prelates of his court, a man of great experience in public business, and acquainted with almost all the princes of Germany. Cardinal Campeggio, for such was his name, after a magnificent reception in the Italian cities on his road, soon perceived the change that had taken place in the empire. When he entered Augsburg, he desired, as was usual, to give his benediction to the people, but they burst into laughter. This was enough: he entered Nuremberg privately, without going to the church of St. Sebaldus, where the clergy awaited him. No priests in sacerdotal ornaments came out to meet him; no cross was solemnly borne before him; one would have thought him some private individual passing along the streets of the city. Everything betokened that the reign of the papacy was drawing to an end.

The Diet of Nuremberg resumed its sittings in the month of January 1524. A storm threatened the national government, owing to the firmness of Frederick. The Swabian league, the wealthiest cities of the empire, and particularly Charles V, had sworn its destruction. He was accused of favouring the new heresy. Accordingly it was resolved to remodify this administration without retaining one of its former members. Frederick, overwhelmed with grief, immediately quitted Nuremberg.

The festival of Easter was approaching. Osiander and the evangelical preachers redoubled their zeal. The former openly declared in his sermons that Antichrist

entered Rome the very day when Constantine left it to fix his residence at Constantinople. The consecration of the palm-branches and many other ceremonies of this feast were omitted: four thousand persons received the sacrament in both kinds, and the Queen of Denmark, the emperor's sister, received it publicly, in like manner, at the castle. "Ah!" exclaimed the Archduke Frederick, losing his temper, "would that you were not my sister!"—"The same womb bore us," replied the queen, "and I will sacrifice everything to please you, except the Word of God."

Campeggio shuddered as he witnessed such audacity; but affect- [364] ing to despise the laughter of the populace and the discourses of the preachers, and resting on the authority of the emperor and of the pope, he reminded the diet of the edict of Worms, and called upon them to put down the Reformation by force. At this language many of the princes and deputies gave vent to their indignation: "What has become of the list of grievances presented to the pope by the German nation?" said they to Campeggio. The legate, following his instructions, assumed an air of candour and surprise, and answered, "Three copies of that list reached Rome; but we have received no official communication of it, and neither the pope nor the college of cardinals could believe that such a paper could have emanated from your lordships. We thought that it came from some private individuals who had published it out of hatred to the court of Rome. In consequence of this I have no instructions on the matter."

The diet was incensed at this reply. If it is thus the pope receives their representations, they will also know how to listen to those he addresses to them. "The people," said many deputies, "are thirsting for the Word of God; and to take it away, as the edict of Worms enjoins, would cause torrents of blood to flow."

The diet immediately made preparations for replying to the pope. As they could not repeal the edict of Worms, a clause was added to it rendering it ineffectual. They said, "The people must conform with it as far as possible." Now many states had declared it impossible to enforce it. At the same time, raising up the importunate shade of the councils of Constance and of Basle, the diet demanded the convocation of a general council of Christendom to be held in Germany.

The friends of the Reformation did not confine themselves to this. What could they expect from a council which perhaps would never be convoked, and which, under all circumstances, would be composed of bishops from every nation? Will Germany submit her anti-Romish inclinations to prelates from France, Spain, Italy, and England? The government of the nation had already been abolished; for it a national assembly should be substituted to protect the interests of the people.

In vain did Hannaart, the Spanish envoy from Charles V, and all the partisans of Rome and the emperor, endeavour to oppose this suggestion; the majority of the diet was immovable. It was agreed that a diet, a secular assembly, should meet at Spires, in the month of November, to regulate all religious questions, and that the states should immediately instruct their theologians to draw up a list of the controverted points to be laid before that august assembly.

They forthwith applied to their task. Each province drew up its memorial, and never had Rome been threatened with a more terrible explosion. Franconia, Brandenburg, Henneburg, Windsheim, Wertheim, and Nuremberg, declared in favour of the Gospel, and against the seven sacraments, the abuses of the mass, the adoration of saints, and the papal supremacy. "Here is coin of the right stamp," said Luther. Not one of the questions that are agitating the popular mind will be passed by in this mutual council. The majority will carry general measures. The unity, independence, and reformation of Germany will be safe.

On being appraised of this, the pope could not restrain his wrath. What! dare they set up a secular tribunal to decide on religious questions in direct opposition to his authority! If this extraordinary resolution should be carried out, Germany would doubtless be saved, but Rome would be lost. A consistory was hastily convened, and from the alarm of the senators one might have thought the Germans were marching against the Capitol. "We must take the electoral hat from Frederick's head," said Aleander. "The kings of England and Spain must threaten to break off all commercial intercourse with the free cities," said another cardinal. The congregation at last decided that the only means of safety would be in moving heaven and earth to prevent the meeting at Spires.

The pope immediately wrote to the emperor: "If I am the first to make head against the storm, it is not because I am the only one the tempest threatens; but because I am at the helm. The rights of the empire are yet more invaded than the dignity of the court of Rome." While the pope was sending this letter to Castile, he was endeavouring to procure allies in Germany. He soon gained over one of the most powerful houses in the empire, that of the dukes of Bavaria. The edict of Worms had not been more strictly enforced there than elsewhere, and the evangelical doctrine had made great progress. But about the close of the year 1521, the princes of that country, put in motion by Doctor Eck, chancellor in the university of Ingolstadt, had drawn nearer to Rome, and had published a decree enjoining all
their subjects to remain faithful to the religion of their ancestors.

The Bavarian bishops were alarmed at this encroachment of the secular power. Eck set out for Rome to solicit the pope for an extension of authority in behalf of the princes.

The pope granted everything, and even conferred on the dukes a [365] fifth of the ecclesiastical revenues of their country.

Thus, at a time when the Reformation possessed no organisation, Roman Catholicism already had recourse to powerful institutions for its support; and catholic princes, aided by the pope, laid their hands on the revenues of the Church, long before the Reformation ventured to touch them. What must we think of the reproaches the Roman Catholics have so often made in this respect?

Clement VII might reckon upon Bavaria to avert the formidable assembly at Spires. Erelong the Archduke Ferdinand, the Bishop of Salzburg, and other princes, were gained in their turn. But Campeggio desired to go still further: Germany must be divided into two hostile camps; Germans must be opposed to Germans.

Sometime before, during his residence at Stuttgard, the legate had concerted with Ferdinand the plan of a league against the Reformation. "There is everything to be feared in an assembly where the voice of the people is heard," said he. "The Diet of Spires may destroy Rome and save Wittenberg. Let us close our ranks; let us come to an understanding for the day of battle." Ratisbon was fixed upon as the place of meeting.

Notwithstanding the jealousy between the houses of Bavaria and Austria, Campeggio succeeded in bringing the Dukes of Bavaria and the Archduke Ferdinand to this city, at the end of June 1524. They were joined by the Archbishop of Salzburg and the Bishops of Trent and Ratisbon. The Bishops of Spires, Bamberg, Augsburg, Strasburg, Basle, Constance, Freisingen, Passau, and Brixen were present by deputy.

The legate opened their sittings, describing in forcible language the dangers threatened by the Reformation both to princes and clergy. "Let us extirpate heresy and save the Church," exclaimed he.

The conference lasted fifteen days in the town-hall of Ratisbon. A grand ball, that continued till daylight, served to enliven this first Catholic assembly held by the papacy against the dawning Reformation. After this, measures were resolved upon for the destruction of the heretics.

The legate thought that, according to the notorious axiom of the Council of Constance, no faith should be kept with heretics, and in the mean time he carried out this great principle on a small scale. During the sittings of the diet at Nuremberg, Campeggio had taken a globe and a book from a poor vendor of astronomical instruments: these he kept, and refused to make any compensation, because the man was a Lutheran. Our authority for this incident is the celebrated Pirckheimer, one of the chief magistrates of Nuremberg.

The princes and bishops bound themselves to enforce the edicts of Worms and Nuremberg; to permit no change in public worship; to tolerate no married priest in their states; to recall all their subjects who might be studying at Wittenberg; and to employ every means in their power for the extirpation of heresy. They enjoined the preachers, in the interpretation of difficult passages, to rely on the fathers of the Latin Church, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory. Not venturing, in the face of the Reformation, to appeal to the authority of the schoolmen, they were content to lay the first foundations of Roman orthodoxy.

But, on the other hand, as they could not close their eyes against the scandals and corrupt morals of the priests, they agreed on a project of reform, in which they endeavoured to embrace those German grievances which least concerned the court of Rome. The priests were forbidden to trade, to haunt the taverns, "to frequent dances," and to dispute over their cups about articles of faith.

Such was the result of the confederation of Ratisbon. Even while taking up arms against the Reformation, Rome conceded something; and in these decrees we may observe the first influence of the Reformation of the sixteenth century to effect an inward renovation of Catholicism. The Gospel cannot display its strength without its enemies endeavouring to imitate it in some way or another. Emser had published a translation of the bible in opposition to Luther's; Eck his Common-places, by way of counterpoise to Melancthon's; and now Rome was opposing to the Reformation those partial essays of reform to which modern Romanism is owing. But all these works were in reality subtle expedients to escape from impending danger; branches plucked indeed from the tree of the Reformation, but planted in a soil which killed them; there was no vitality, and never will there be any vitality in such attempts.

Another fact here occurs to us. The Roman party formed at Ratisbon the first league that infringed the unity of Germany. The signal for battle was given from the pope's camp. Ratisbon was the cradle of this division, this political rending of their native land, which so many of the Germans deplore to this hour. The national assembly of Spires, by sanctioning and generalizing the reform of the Church, would

have secured the unity of the empire. The conventicle of separatists at Ratisbon for ever divided the nation into two parties.

Yet Campeggio's plans did not at first succeed as had been expected. Few princes answered this appeal. Luther's most decided adversaries, Duke George of Saxony, the Elector Joachim of Brandenburg, the ecclesiastical electors, and the imperial cities, took no part in it. It was felt that the pope's legate was forming a Romish party in Germany against the nation itself. Popular sympathies counterbalanced religious antipathies, and in a short time the Ratisbon reformation became the laughing-stock of the people. But the first step had been taken, the example given. It was imagined that it would be no difficult task eventually to strengthen and enlarge this Roman league. Those who still hesitated would necessarily be drawn into it by the progress of events. To the legate Campeggio belongs the glory of having dug the mine which was most seriously to endanger the liberties of Germany, the existence of the empire, and of the Reformation. Henceforward Luther's cause ceased to be a mere religious affair; the dispute with the monk of Wittenberg ranked among the political events of Europe. Luther is about to be eclipsed; and Charles V, the pope, and the princes will be the principal actors on the stage where the grand drama of the sixteenth century is to be performed.

Yet the assembly at Spires was still kept in view; it might repair the mischief that Campeggio had effected at Ratisbon. Rome made every exertion to prevent it. "What!" said the papal deputies, not only to Charles V but also to Henry VIII and other princes of Christendom, "What! do these insolent Germans pretend to decide points of faith in a national assembly? It would seem that kings, the imperial authority, all Christendom, and the whole world, should submit to their decrees!"

The moment was well chosen to act upon the emperor. The war between this prince and Francis I was at its height. Pescara and the Constable of Bourbon had quitted Italy, and entering France in the month of May, had laid siege to Marseilles. The pope, who looked with an evil eye on this attack, might make a powerful diversion in the rear of the imperial army. Charles, who must have feared to displease him, did not hesitate, and immediately sacrificed the independence of the empire to the favour of Rome and the success of his struggle with France.

On the 15th of July, Charles issued an edict from Burgos in Castile, wherein he declared, with am imperious and angry tone, "that the pope alone had the right of convoking a council, and the emperor of demanding one; that the meeting appointed to take place at Spires could not and ought not to be tolerated; that it was strange the German nation should undertake a task which all the other nations in the universe,

even with the pope's guidance, would not have the right of doing; and that they should hasten to enforce the decree of Worms against the new Mahomet."

Thus came from Spain and Italy the blow that arrested in Germany the development of the Gospel. Charles was not yet satisfied. In 1519, he had proposed to unite his sister, the Archduchess Catherine, to John Frederick, son of Duke John, the elector's brother, and heir to the electorate. But was it not this Saxon house that supported in Germany those principles of religious and political independence which Charles hated? He decided on breaking off entirely with the troublesome and guilty representative of the evangelical and national ideas, and gave his sister in marriage to John III, king of Portugal. Frederick, who in 1519 had shown his indifference to the overtures of the King of Spain, was able in 1524 to suppress the indignation he felt at the emperor's conduct; but Duke John haughtily intimated that this proceeding had wounded his feelings very deeply.

Thus the two hostile camps that were destined to rend the empire for so long a period became daily more distinct.

CHAPTER 6

Persecution—Gaspard Tauber—A Bookseller—Cruelties in Wurtemberg, Salzburg, and Bavaria—Pomerania—Henry of Zuphten

The Roman party was not satisfied with this. The alliance of Ratisbon was not to be a mere form; it must be sealed with blood. Ferdinand and Campeggio descended the Danube together from Ratisbon to Vienna, and during their journey bound each other by cruel promises. The persecution immediately broke out in the Austrian states.

One Gaspard Tauber, a citizen of Vienna, had circulated Luther's writings, and had even written against the invocation of saints, purgatory, and transubstantiation. Being thrown into prison, he was summoned by his judges, both theologians and lawyers, to retract his errors. It was thought that he had consented, and every preparation was made in Vienna to gratify the people with this solemn spectacle. On the festival of St. Mary's nativity, two pulpits were erected in St. Stephen's cemetery, one for the leader of the choir, who was to extol by his chants the repentance of the heretic; and the other for Tauber himself. The formula of recantation was placed in his hands; the people and choristers waited in silence. Whether Tauber had made no promise, or whether at the moment of abjuration his faith suddenly revived with fresh energy, he exclaimed, "I am not convinced, and I appeal to the holy Roman empire!" Clergy, choristers, and people were seized with astonishment and alarm. But Tauber continued to call for death rather than that he should deny the Gospel. He was decapitated, and his body burnt; and his courage made an indelible impression on the inhabitants of Vienna.

At Buda in Hungary, an evangelical bookseller, named John, had circulated Luther's New Testament and other of his writings throughout that country. He was bound to a stake; his persecutors then piled his books around him, enclosing him as if in a tower, and then set fire to them. John manifested unshaken courage, exclaiming from the midst of the flames, that he was delighted to suffer in the cause of the Lord. "Blood follows blood," cried Luther, when informed of this martyrdom, "but that generous blood, which Rome loves to shed, will at last suffocate the pope with his kings and their kingdoms."

Fanaticism grew fiercer every day; evangelical ministers were expelled from their churches; magistrates were banished; and at times the most horrible punishments were inflicted. In Wurtemberg, an inquisitor named Reichler caused the Lutherans, and above all the preachers, to be hanged upon trees. Barbarous ruffians

were found who unfeelingly nailed the pastors by their tongues to a post; so that these unhappy victims, tearing themselves violently from the wood to which they were fastened, were horribly mutilated in attempting to recover their liberty, and thus deprived of that gift which they had long used to proclaim the Gospel.

Similar persecutions took place in the other states of the catholic league. An evangelical minister in the neighbourhood of Salzburg was led to prison, where he was to pass the rest of his days; whilst the police who had him in charge were drinking at an alehouse on the road, two young peasants, moved with compassion, eluded their vigilance, and delivered the pastor. The anger of the archbishop was inflamed against these poor people, and without any form of trial they were ordered to be beheaded. They were secretly led outside the town early in the morning; and when they arrived on the plain where they were to die, the executioner himself hesitated, for (said he) they have not been tried. "Do what I command you," harshly replied the archbishop's emissary, "and leave the responsibility to the prince!" and the heads of these youthful liberators immediately fell beneath the sword.

The persecution was most violent in the states of the Duke of Bavaria: priests were deprived of their office; nobles driven from their castles; spies filled the whole country; and in every heart reigned mistrust and alarm. As Bernard Fichtel, a magistrate, was going to Nuremberg on the duke's business, on the high-road he fell in with Francis Burkhardt, professor at Ingolstadt, and one of Dr. Eck's friends. Burkhardt accosted him, and they travelled together. After supper the professor began to talk of religion; Fichtel, who was no stranger to his fellow-traveller, reminded him that the new edict prohibited such conversations. "Between us," replied Burkhardt, "there is nothing to fear."—Upon this Fichtel remarked: "I do not think this edict can ever be enforced." He then proceeded to express himself in an ambiguous manner on purgatory, and said it was a horrible thing to punish religious differences with death. At these words Burkhardt could not contain himself: "What is more just," said he, "than to cut off the heads of all these Lutheran rascals!" He took a friendly leave of Fichtel, but immediately denounced him. Fichtel was thrown into prison, and the wretched man, who had never thought of becoming a martyr, and whose religious convictions were not very deep, only escaped death by a shameful retraction. There was no security in any place, not even in the bosom of a friend.

But others met with that death from which Fichtel escaped. In vain was the Gospel preached in secret; the dukes tracked it in its obscurity and mystery,—beneath the domestic roof and in the lonely fields.

"The cross and persecution reign in Bavaria," said Luther; "these wild beasts are lashing themselves into madness."

Even the north of Germany was not free from these cruelties. Bogislaus, duke of Pomerania, being dead, his son, who had been brought up at Duke George's court, persecuted the Gospel; Suaven and Knipstrow were compelled to flee.

But it was in Holstein that one of the most extraordinary instances of fanaticism occurred.

Henry von Zuphten, who had escaped, as we have seen, from the convent at Antwerp, was preaching the Gospel at Bremen; Nicholas Boye, pastor of Mehldorf in the Dittmarsh, and several pious men of that district, invited him to come and proclaim Jesus Christ among them. He complied with their wishes. Immediately the prior of the Dominicans and the vicar of the official of Hamburg consulted together. "If he preaches and the people listen to him," said they, "all is lost!" The prior, after passing an agitated night, rose early and repaired to the barren and uncultivated heath where the forty-eight regents of the country were wont to hold their meetings. "The monk of Bremen is come to ruin all the Dittmarshers," said he to them. These forty-eight simple-minded and ignorant men, being persuaded that they would acquire great renown by delivering the world from the heretical monk, resolved on putting him to death, without having either seen or heard him.

This was on Saturday, and the prior wished to prevent Henry from preaching on the following day. He arrived at the pastor of Boye's dwelling in the middle of the night with the letter of the forty-eight regents. "If it be God's will that I should die among the Dittmarshers," said Henry von Zuphten, "heaven is as near me there as elsewhere; I will preach."

He went up into the pulpit and preached with great energy. His hearers, moved and excited by his christian eloquence, had scarcely left the church when the prior handed them the letter of the fortyeight regents, forbidding the monk to preach. They immediately sent their representatives to the heath; and, after a long discussion, the Dittmarshers agreed that, considering their great ignorance, they would wait until Easter. But the incensed prior went up to some of the regents and inflamed their zeal afresh. "We will write to him," said they.—"Mind what you are about," replied the prior; "if he begins to speak, we shall be able to do nothing with him. We must seize him during the night, and burn him before he can open his mouth."

They determined to adopt this course. At nightfall on the day after the Festival of the Conception, the Ave Maria bell was rung. At this signal, all the neighbouring villagers assembled, to the number of five hundred, and their leaders having broached three butts of Hamburg beer, by this means inspired them with great courage. It was striking midnight when they reached Mehldorf;—the peasants were armed;—the monks carried torches;—all marched in disorder, exchanging shouts of fury. As they entered the village, they kept deep silence for fear Henry should escape.

On a sudden the gates of the parsonage were burst open; the drunken peasants rushed in, striking everything they saw; dishes, kettles, flagons, clothing, were tossed about pell-mell; they seized on all the gold and silver they could find, and falling on the poor pastor, they beat him, with loud cries of "Kill him! kill him!" and then flung him into the mud. But it was Henry they were seeking; they pulled him out of bed, tied his hands behind his back, and dragged him after them, without clothing, and in a piercing cold night. "Why did you come here," said they. As Henry answered mildly, they cried out, "Down with him! down with him! if we listen to him we shall become heretics also!" They had dragged him naked through the ice and snow; his feet were bleeding; he entreated to be set on horseback. "Yes, indeed," replied they, mocking him, "we will find horses for heretics! March!"—And they continued hurrying him towards the heath. A woman, standing at the door of her cottage as the servant of God was passing, began to weep. "My good woman," said Henry, "do not weep for me." The bailiff pronounced his condemnation.

Upon this one of the madmen who had dragged him hither struck the preacher of Jesus Christ on the head with a sword; another gave him a blow with a club; after which they brought him a poor monk to receive his confession. "Brother," said Henry, "have I ever done you any wrong?"—"None," replied the monk.—"In that case I have nothing to confess to you," resumed Henry, "and you have nothing to forgive me." The monk retired in confusion. Several ineffectual attempts were made to kindle the pile; the logs would not catch fire. For two hours the martyr remained thus before the furious peasantry,—calm, and raising his eyes to heaven. While they were binding him to throw him into the flames, he began the confession of his faith. "Burn first," said a peasant, striking him on the mouth with his fist, "and then you may speak!" They tried to fling him on the pile, but he fell on one side. John Holme, seizing a club, struck him upon the breast, and he was laid dead on the burning heap. "Such is the true history of the sufferings of the holy martyr, Henry von Zuphten."

CHAPTER 7

Divisions—The Lord's Supper—Two Extremes—Hoen's Discovery—Carlstadt—Luther—Mysticism of the Anabaptists—Carlstadt at Orlamund—Luther's Mission—Interview at Table—The Conference of Orlamund—Carlstadt banished

While the Roman party was everywhere drawing the sword against the Reformation, this work underwent new developments. It is not at Zurich or at Geneva, but in Wittenberg, the focus of the Lutheran revival, that we should look for the commencement of that [369] reformed Church, of which Calvin became the chief doctor. These

two great families had slept in the same cradle. Union ought in like manner to have crowned their mature age. But when the question of the Lord's Supper was once started, Luther violently rejected the reformed element, and bound himself and his Church in an exclusive Lutheranism. The vexation he felt at this rival doctrine caused him to lose much of his natural kindness of disposition, and aroused in him a mistrust, an habitual discontent and I rritation, to which he had hitherto been a stranger.

The controversy broke out between the two old friends, the two champions who had fought side by side at Leipsic against Rome,— between Carlstadt and Luther. In each of them their attachment to contrary doctrines originated in a turn of mind that merits our esteem. In fact, there are two extremes in questions of religion; the one materialises, the other spiritualises everything. The former of these two extremes is that of Rome; the latter, of the Mystics. Religion, like man himself, is compounded of body and soul; the pure idealists as well as the materialists, in religious views no less than in philosophical systems, are equally mistaken.

Such is the great question hidden under the discussion about the Lord's Supper. While on the superfiial glance we see nothing but a trivial dispute about words, a deeper observation discloses to us one of the most important controversies that can occupy the human mind.

Here the reformers divide into two parties; but each carries away with it a portion of the truth. Luther and his followers intend opposing an exaggerated spiritualism; Carlstadt and the reformed attack a hateful materialism. Each of them arraigns the error which is in his view appears the most fatal, and, in assailing it, possibly goes beyond the truth. But this is of no importance; each of them is true in his general tendency, and although belonging to two different hosts, these two

illustrious teachers both take their stand under one common banner,—that of Jesus Christ, who alone is Truth in its infinite extent.

Carlstadt thought that nothing could be more injurious to real piety than confidence in outward ceremonies and in a certain magical influence of the sacraments. The outward participation in the Lord's Supper, according to Rome, was sufficient for salvation, and this principle had materialised religion. Carlstadt saw no better way of restoring its spirituality than by denying all presence of Christ's body: and he taught that this holy feast was to believers simply a pledge of their redemption.

Did Carlstadt arrive at these opinions unaided? No: all things are bound together in the Church; and the historical filiation of the reformed doctrine, so long overlooked, now appears clearly established. Unquestionably we cannot fail to see in this doctrine the sentiments of several of the Fathers; but if we search in the long chain of ages for the link which more immediately connects that of Carlstadt and the Swiss reformers, we shall find it in John Wessel, the most illustrious doctor of the fifteenth century.

A christian lawyer of Holland, Cornelius Hoen (Honius), a friend of Erasmus, and who had been thrown into prison in 1523 for his attachment to the Gospel, found among the papers of James Hoek, dean of Naeldwik, a great friend of Wessel, several treatises by this illustrious doctor touching the Lord's Supper. Hoen, convinced of the truth of the spiritual sense ascribed by Wessel to this sacrament, thought it his duty to communicate to the reformers these papers written by his fellow-countryman. He therefore transmitted them to two of his friends, John Rhodius, president of the brethren of the Common-life at Utrecht, and George Sagarus or Saganus, together with a letter on the same subject, and desired them to lay all of them before Luther.

About the close of the year 1520, the two Dutchmen arrived at Wittenberg, where they seem to have been favourably received by Carlstadt from the first moment; while Luther, as was his custom, invited these foreign friends to meet some of his colleagues at dinner. The conversation naturally fell on the treasures these Netherlanders had brought with them, and particularly on the writings of Wessel concerning the Lord's Supper.

Rhodius invited Luther to receive the doctrine that the great doctor of the fifteenth century had so clearly set forth, and Carlstadt entreated his friend to acknowledge the spiritual signification of the Eucharist, and even to write against the carnal eating of Christ's body. Luther shook his head and refused, upon which Carlstadt exclaimed warmly: "Well, then, if you will not do it, I will, although far less fitted than yourself." Such was the beginning of the division that afterwards occurred

between these two colleagues. The two Netherlanders, being rejected in Saxony, resolved to turn their steps towards Switzerland, where we shall meet with them again.

Luther henceforward took a diametrically opposite direction. At first, he had apparently contended in favour of the opinion we have just pointed out. In his treatise on the mass, which appeared [370] in 1520, he said: "I can every day partake of the sacraments, if I only call to mind the words and promises of Christ, and if I nourish and strengthen my faith with them." Neither Carlstadt, Zwingle, nor Calvin, have ever used stronger language than this. It would even appear that the idea frequently occurred to him at this period, that a symbolical explanation of the Lord's Supper would be the most powerful weapon to overturn the papal system from top to bottom; for he said in 1525, that five years previously he had undergone many severe temptations for this doctrine, and that the man who could have proved to him that there was only bread and wine in the eucharist, would have done him the greatest service.

But new circumstances threw him into an opposition, at times not unmingled with violence, against those very opinions to which he had made so near an approach. The fanaticism of the enthusiasts of the day explains the direction Luther now took. They were not content with undervaluing what they called the external Word, that is, the Bible, and with pretending to special revelations from the Holy Ghost; they went so far as to despise the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as something outward, and to speak of an inward communion as being the only true communion. From that time, in every attempt made to explain the doctrine of the Lord's Supper in a symbolical manner, Luther saw only the danger of weakening the authority of the Holy Scriptures; of substituting arbitrary allegories for their real meaning; of spiritualizing everything in religion; of making it consist, not in the gifts of God, but in the impressions of men; and of substituting by this means for the true Christianity a mysticism, a theosophy, a fanaticism, that would infallibly become its grave. We must acknowledge that, had it not been for Luther's violent opposition, the mystical, enthusiastic, and subjective tendency would then perhaps have made rapid progress, and would have turned back the tide of blessings that the Reformation was to spread over the world.

Carlstadt, impatient at being prevented from explaining his doctrine freely in Wittenberg, urged by his conscience to combat a system which in his "opinion lowered Christ's death and destroyed his righteousness," resolved "to give a public testimony for the love of poor and cruelly deceived Christendom." He left Wittenberg at the beginning of 1524, without informing either the university or the Chapter of his

intentions, and repaired to the small town of Orlamund, the church of which was placed under his superintendence. He had the incumbent dismissed, got himself nominated pastor in his stead, and in despite of the chapter, the university, and the elector, established himself in this new post.

He soon began to propagate his doctrine. "It is impossible," said he, "to find in the real presence any advantage that does not proceed from faith; it is therefore useless." In explaining Christ's words at the institution of the Lord's Supper, he had recourse to an interpretation which is not admitted by the reformed Churches. Luther, in the disputation at Leipsic, had explained these words: Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, by separating the two propositions, and applying the latter to our Saviour's person. "In like manner," said Carlstadt, "the words take, eat, refer to the bread; but this is my body relates to Jesus Christ, who then pointed to himself, and intimated by the symbol of breaking the bread, that his body was soon to be broken."

Carlstadt did not stop here. He was scarcely emancipated from the guardianship of Luther, before he felt his zeal revive against the images. It was easy for his imprudent discourses and his enthusiastic language to inflame men's minds in these agitated times. The people, imagining they heard a second Elijah, broke the idols of Baal. The excitement soon spread to the surrounding villages. The elector would have interfered; but the peasants replied that they ought to obey God rather than man. Upon this, the prince determined to send Luther to Orlamund to restore peace. Luther regarded Carlstadt as a man eaten up by a love of notoriety, a fanatic who might be so far carried away as to make war on Christ himself. Frederick might perhaps have made a wiser choice. Luther departed, and Carlstadt was fated to see this troublesome rival once more come and disturb his plans of reform, and check his soaring flight.

Jena was on the road to Orlamund. Luther reached this city on the 23rd of August, and on the 24th went into the pulpit at seven in the morning; he spoke for an hour and a half in the presence of a numerous auditory against fanaticism, rebellion, the breaking of images, and the contempt of the real presence, inveighing most energetically against the innovations of Orlamund. He did not mention Carlstadt by name, but every one could see whom he had in view.

Carlstadt, either by accident or design, was at Jena, and among the number of Luther's hearers. He did not hesitate to seek an explanation of this sermon. Luther was dining with the prior of Wittenberg, the burgomaster, the town-clerk, the pastor of Jena, and several officers of the emperor and the margrave, when he received a

letter from Carlstadt demanding an interview; he handed it to his neighbours, and replied to the bearer: "If Doctor Carlstadt wishes to come to me, let him come; if not, I can do without him." Carlstadt [371] came. His visit produced a lively sensation in the whole party. The majority, eager to see the two lions battling, suspended their repast and looked on, while the more timid turned pale with alarm.

Carlstadt, on Luther's invitation, took a seat in front of him and said: "Doctor, in your sermon of this morning you classed me with those who inculcate rebellion and assassination. Such a charge I declare to be false." Luther.—"I did not name you, but since the cap fits, you may wear it."

After a brief pause Carlstadt resumed:

"I will undertake to prove that on the doctrine of the sacrament you have contradicted yourself, and that no one, since the days of the apostles, has taught it so purely as myself."

Luther.—"Write! combat my opinions!"

Carlstadt.—"I offer you a public disputation at Wittenberg or at Erfurth, if you will procure me a safe-conduct."

Luther.—"Fear nothing, doctor."

Carlstadt.—"You bind me hand and foot, and when you have rendered me unable to defend myself, you strike me."

There was another brief silence, when Luther resumed:— "Write against me, but openly and not in secret."

Carlstadt.—"I would do so, if I knew that you were speaking sincerely."

Luther.—"Do so, and I will give you a florin." Carlstadt.—"Give it me; I accept the challenge."

At these words Luther took a gold florin out of his pocket, and giving it to Carlstadt, said: "There is the money: now strike boldly." Carlstadt holding the florin in his hand, turned towards the assembly and said: "Dear brethren, this is my earnest-money, and warrant that I have authority to write against Doctor Luther; be you all witnesses to this."

Then bending the florin that it might be known again, he put it in his purse and shook hands with Luther, who drank his health, to which Carlstadt responded. "The more vigorous your attack, the better I shall like it," resumed Luther.

"If I miss you," replied Carlstadt, "it shall be through no fault of mine."

They once more shook hands, and Carlstadt returned to his dwelling. Thus, says an historian, as from a single spark often proceeds the conflagration of a whole forest, so from this small beginning a great division arose in the Church.

Luther set out for Orlamund, and arrived there very ill prepared by the scene at Jena. He assembled the council and the church, and said: "Neither the elector nor the university will acknowledge Carlstadt as your pastor."—"If Carlstadt is not our pastor," replied the treasurer of the town-council, "St. Paul is a false teacher, and your books are full of falsehoods, for we have elected him."

As he said this, Carlstadt entered the room. Some of those who were near Luther beckoned him to sit down, but Carlstadt, going straight up to Luther, said: "Dear doctor, if you will allow me, I will entertain you."

Luther.—"You are my opponent. I gave you a gold florin for that purpose."

Carlstadt.—"I will be your opponent so long as you remain the enemy of God and his truth."

Luther.—"Leave the room: I cannot allow you to be present here."

Carlstadt.—"This is a public meeting. If your cause is good, why should you fear me?"

Luther to his servant.—"Go and put the horses to; I have nothing to do with Carlstadt, and since he will not leave, I must."

At the same time Luther rose from his seat, upon which Carlstadt quitted the room.

After a short pause, Luther resumed:—

"Prove by Scripture that we ought to destroy the images."

A Councillor, opening a Bible.—"Doctor, you will grant me, however, that Moses knew God's commandments? Well, then, here are his words: Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness."

Luther.—This passage refers only to idolatrous images. If I have a crucifix hung up in my chamber, and do not worship it, what harm can it do me?"

A Shoemaker.—"I have frequently taken off my hat before an image that I have seen in a room or in the streets. It is an idolatrous act that deprives God of the glory that is due to him alone."

Luther.—"Must we then, because of their abuse, put our women to death, and throw our wine into the streets?"

Another Member of the Church.—"No! these are God's creatures, which we are not commanded to destroy."

After the conference had lasted Sometime longer, Luther and his friends returned to their carriage, astonished at what they had seen, and without having succeeded in convincing the inhabitants, who exclaimed for themselves the right of freely interpreting and explaining the Scriptures. The excitement was very great in Orlamund; the people insulted Luther, and some of them shouted out: "Begone, in the name of all the devils! May you break your neck before you get out of our city!" Never had the reformer undergone such humiliation.

He proceeded thence to Kale, where the pastor had also embraced the doctrines of Carlstadt, and resolved to preach there. But when he entered the pulpit, he found the fragments of a crucifix. At first his emotion was very great; but recovering himself, he gathered up the pieces into a corner, and delivered a sermon without a single allusion to this circumstance. He said at a later period: "I determined to revenge myself on the devil by contempt."

The nearer the elector approached the end of his days, the more he feared lest men should go too far in the Reformation. He gave orders that Carlstadt should be deprived of his offices, and that he should not only leave Orlamund, but the electoral states also. In vain did the church of this place intercede in his favour; in vain did they ask that he might be allowed to remain among them as a private citizen, with permission to preach occasionally; in vain did they represent that they valued God's truth more than the whole world, or even a thousand worlds, if God had created as many: Frederick was inflexible, and he even went so far as to refuse Carlstadt the

funds necessary for his journey. Luther had nothing to do with these severe measures of the prince; they were far from his disposition, as he showed at a later period. But Carlstadt looked upon him as the author of all his misfortunes, and filled Germany with his complaints and lamentations. He wrote a farewell address to his friends at Orlamund. The people were called together by the ringing of bells; and the letter, which was read to the assembled church, drew tears from every eye. It was signed, "Andrew Bodenstein, expelled by Luther, unheard and unconvicted."

We cannot but feel pain at seeing the contest between these two men, who once were friends, and who were both so excellent. A feeling of sadness took possession of all the disciples of the Reformation. What would become of it now that its most illustrious defenders thus opposed each other? Luther noticed these fears, and endeavoured to allay them. "Let us fight," said he, "as if fighting for another. The cause is God's, and to God belongs the glory! He will contend and conquer without us. Let that fall which ought to fall; let that stand which ought to stand. It is not our own cause that is at stake, nor our own glory that we seek."

Carlstadt took refuge at Strasburg, where he published several works. He was a sound Latin, Greek, and Hebrew scholar, says Dr. Scheur; and Luther acknowledged his superior crudition. Endowed with an elevated mind, he sacrificed his reputation, his rank, his home, his very bread, to his convictions. He afterwards proceeded to Switzerland; it is there he should have commenced his teaching: his independence needed the free air in which Zwingle and Oecolampadius breathed. His doctrine soon awakened almost as much attention as that obtained by Luther's first theses. Switzerland appeared to be won; Bucer and Capito seemed to be carried away by it.

Luther's indignation was then at its height, and he published one of the most powerful, but at the same time one of his most violent controversial works—his book "Against the Celestial Prophets."

Thus the Reformation, attacked by the pope, attacked by the emperor, attacked by the princes, was beginning also to tear its own vitals. It seemed that it must fall under the weight of so many evils; and assuredly it would have fallen had it been a work of man. But soon from the very brink of destruction it rose up with renewed energy.

CHAPTER 8

Progress—Resistance against the Ratisbon Leaguers—Meeting between Philip of Hesse and Melancthon—The Landgrave converted to the Gospel—The Palatinate—Luneburg—Holstein—The Grand-Master at Wittenberg

The Catholic League of Ratisbon and the persecutions that followed it, created a powerful reaction among the German people. They did not feel disposed to suffer themselves to be deprived of that Word of God which had been restored to them at last; and to the orders of Charles V, to the bulls of the pope, the menaces and burning piles of Ferdinand and the other Roman-catholic princes, they replied: "We will keep it!"

No sooner had the members of the league quitted Ratisbon, than the deputies of the towns, whose bishops had taken part in this alliance, in surprise and indignation met at Spires, and declared that their ministers in despite of the prohibition of the bishops should preach the Gospel, and nothing but the Gospel, conformably to the doctrine of the prophets and apostles. They then proceeded to draw up a memorial in firm and consistent language, to be laid before the national assembly.

The imperial letter from Burgos, it is true, came to disturb their minds. Nevertheless, about the close of the year, the deputies of these cities with many nobles met at Ulm, and swore to assist one another in case of attack.

Thus to the camp formed by Austria, Bavaria, and the bishops, the free cities immediately opposed another in which they planted the standard of the Gospel and of the national liberties.

While the cities were thus placing themselves in the van of the Reformation, many princes were gained over to its cause. In the beginning of the month of June 1524, as Melancthon was returning on horseback from a visit to his mother, accompanied by Camerarius and some other friends, he met a brilliant train near Frankfort. It was Philip, landgrave of Hesse, who three years before called on Luther at Worms, and who was then on his road to the tournament at Heidelberg, where all the princes of Germany would be present. Thus did Providence bring Philip successively into contact with the two reformers. As it was known that the celebrated doctor had gone to his native place, one of the landgrave's attendants said: "It is Philip Melancthon, I think." The young prince immediately clapped spurs to his horse, and coming near the doctor said: "Is your name Philip?"—"It is," replied the scholar a little intimidated, and respectfully preparing to alight. "Keep your seat," said the prince;

"turn round, and come and pass the night with me; there are some matters on which I desire to have a little talk with you; fear nothing."—"What can I fear from such a prince as you?" replied the doctor.—"Ah! ah!" said the landgrave with a laugh, "if I were to carry you off and give you up to Campeggio, he would not be offended, I think." The two Philips rode on together, side by side, the prince asking questions and the doctor replying. The landgrave was delighted with the clear and impressive views set before him by Melancthon. The latter at length begged permission to continue his journey, and Philip of Hesse parted from him with reluctance. "On one condition," said he, "that on your return home you will carefully examine the questions we have been discussing, and send me the result in writing." Melancthon gave his promise. "Go then," said Philip, "and pass through my states."

Melancthon drew up with his usual talent an Abridgment of the Revived Doctrine of Christianity; a forcible and concise treatise, that made a decided impression on the landgrave's mind. Shortly after his return from the tournament at Heidelberg, this prince, without joining the free cities, published an edict by which, in opposition to the league of Ratisbon, he ordered the Gospel to be preached in all its purity. He embraced it himself with the energy peculiar to his character. "Rather would I give up my body and life, my subjects and my states," said he, "than the Word of God." A Minorite friar, named Ferber, perceiving this prince's leaning towards the Reformation, wrote him a letter full of reproach, in which he conjured him to remain faithful to Rome. "I will remain faithful to the old doctrine," replied Philip, "but such as it is contained in Scripture." He then proved very forcibly that man is justified solely by faith.

Astonishment kept the monk silent. The landgrave was commonly styled "Melancthon's disciple."

Other princes followed in the same direction. The elector-palatine refused to lend himself to any persecution; the Duke of Luneburg, nephew to the Elector of Saxony, began to reform his own states; and the King of Denmark gave orders that in Sleswick and Holstein every one should be free to serve God as his conscience suggested. The Reformation gained a still more important victory. A prince, whose conversion to the Gospel was destined to exert the greatest influence, even in our days, began about this time to turn aside from Rome. One day about the end of June, shortly after Melancthon's return to Wittenberg, Albert, margrave of Brandenburg and grandmaster of the Teutonic order, entered Luther's chamber. This chief of the military monks of Germany, who then possessed Prussia, had gone to the Diet of Nuremberg to invoke the aid of the empire against Poland. He returned in the deepest distress. On the one hand, the preaching of Osiander and the reading of the Bible had

convinced him that his monastic profession was contrary to the Word of God; and on the other the fall of the national government in Germany had deprived him of all hope of obtaining the succor he had gone to solicit. What can he do then? The Saxon councillor Von Planitz, with whom he had quitted Nuremberg, advised him to see the reformer. "What do you think of the regulations of my order?" said the restless and agitated prince.

Luther felt no hesitation: he saw that a line of conduct in conformity with the Gospel was the only thing that could save Prussia. "Invoke the aid of God," said he to the grand-master; "throw off the senseless and confused rules of your order; put an end to that abominable principality, a veritable hermaphrodite, which is neither religious nor secular; relinquish that false chastity, and seek the true one; take a wife, and instead of that nameless monster, found a legitimate sovereignty." These words placed distinctly before the mind of the grand-master a state of things that he had as yet conceived but vaguely. A smile lit up his features; but he had too much prudence to declare himself; he remained silent. Melancthon, who was present, spoke to the same effect as Luther, and the prince returned to his states, leaving the reformers under the conviction that the seed they had sown in his heart would one day bear fruit.

Thus Charles V and the pope had opposed the national assembly at Spires for fear the Word of God should gain over all who might be present; but the Word of God cannot be bound; they refused to let it be heard in one of the halls of a town in the Lower Palatinate; it avenged itself by spreading over all the provinces, and manifested in every part of the empire that Divine power which neither bulls nor edicts can ever take away.

CHAPTER 9

Reforms—All Saints Church—Fall of the Mass—Learning—Christian Schools—Learning extended to the Laity—The Arts—Moral Religion—Esthetical Religion—Music—Poetry—Painting

While the nations and their rulers were thus hastening forward to the light, the reformers were endeavouring to regenerate everything, to interpenetrate everything with the principles of Christianity. The state of public worship first engaged their attention. The time fixed by the reformer, on his return from the Wartburg, had arrived. "Now," said he, "that men's hearts have been strengthened by Divine grace, we must put an end to the scandals that pollute the kingdom of the Lord, and dare something in the name of Jesus." He required that men should communicate in both kinds (the bread and wine); that everything should be retrenched from the ceremony of the eucharist that tended to make it a sacrifice; that Christians should never assemble together without having the Gospel preached; that believers, or at least the priests and scholars, should meet every morning at five or six o'clock to read the Old Testament; and at a corresponding hour in the evening to read the New Testament; that every Sunday, the whole Church should assemble in the morning and afternoon, and that the great object of their worship should be to sound abroad the Word of God.

The church of All Saints at Wittenberg especially excited Luther's indignation. Seckendorf informs us that 9901 masses were there celebrated yearly, and 35,570 pounds of wax annually burnt. Luther called it "a sacrilegious Tophet." "There are only three or four lazy-bellies," said he, "who still worship this shameful mammon, and if I had not restrained the people, this house of All Saints, or rather of all devils, would have made such a noise in the world as has never before been heard."

The struggle began around this church. It resembled those ancient sanctuaries of paganism in Egypt, Gaul, and Germany, which were destined to fall that Christianity might be established. Luther, desiring that the mass should be abolished in this cathedral, addressed a petition to the Chapter to this effect on the 1st of March 1523, and a second on the 11th of July. The canons having pleaded the elector's orders, Luther replied, "What is the prince's order to us in this case? He is a secular prince; the sword, and not the preaching of the Gospel, belongs to him." Here Luther clearly marks the distinction between the State and the Church. "There is but one sacrifice that taketh away sins," said he again, "Christ, who offered himself up once for all; and in this we are partakers, not by works or by sacrifices, but solely by faith in the Word of God."

The elector, who felt his end drawing near, was opposed to new reforms. But fresh entreaties were added to those of Luther. "It is time to act," said Jonas, provost of the cathedral, to the elector. "A manifestation of the Gospel, so striking as that which we now have, does not ordinarily last longer than a sunbeam. Let us make haste then."

As the letter of Jonas did not change the elector's views, Luther lost all patience; he thought the moment had come for striking a decisive blow, and addressed a threatening letter to the chapter: "I entreat you amicably, and urge you seriously, to put an end to all this sectarian worship. If you refuse, you will receive (with God's help) the reward that you have deserved. I mention this for your guidance, and require a positive and immediate answer,—yes or no,—before Sunday next, that I may know what I have to do. May God give you grace to follow his light."Thursday, 8th December 1524. "Martin Luther, "Preacher at Wittenberg."

At the same time the rector, two burgomasters, and ten coun cillors, waited on the dean, and entreated him in the name of the university, the council, and the township of Wittenberg, "to abolish [375] the great and horrible impiety committed in the mass against the majesty of God."

The Chapter was forced to give way; they declared that, being enlightened by the holy Word of God, they acknowledged the abuses that had been pointed out, and published a new order of churchservice, which began to be observed on Christmas-day 1524.

Thus fell the mass in this renowned sanctuary, where it had so long resisted the reiterated attacks of the reformers. The Elector Frederick, suffering from the gout, and rapidly drawing near his end, could not, in spite of all his exertions, prevent this great victory of the Reformation. He saw in it a manifestation of the Divine will, and gave way. The fall of the Romish observances in the church of All Saints hastened their abolition in a great number of churches throughout Christendom; everywhere the same resistance was offered,—everywhere there was the same triumph. In vain did the priests, and even the princes in many places, try to interpose obstacles; they could not succeed.

It was not the public worship alone that the Reformation was ordained to change. The school was early placed beside the Church; and these two great institutions, so powerful to regenerate the nations, were equally reanimated by it. It was by a close alliance with learning that the Reformation entered into the world; in the hour of its triumph, it did not forget its ally.

Christianity is not a simple development of Judaism. Unlike the papacy, it does not aim at confining man again in the close swaddling bands of outward ordinances and human doctrines. Christianity is a new creation; it lays hold of the inner man, and transforms him in the inmost principles of his human nature, so that man no longer requires other men to impose rules upon him; but, aided by God, he can of himself and by himself distinguish what is true, and do what is right.

To lead mankind to that ripe age which Christ has purchased for them, and to free them from that tutelage in which Rome had held them so long, the Reformation had to develop the whole man; and while regenerating his heart and his will by the Word of God, to enlighten his understanding by the study of profane and sacred learning.

Luther saw this; he felt that, to strengthen the Reformation, it was requisite to work on the young, to improve the schools, and to propagate throughout Christendom the knowledge necessary for a profound study of the Holy Scriptures. This, accordingly, was one of the objects of his life. He saw it in particular at the period which we have reached, and wrote to the councillors of all the cities of Germany, calling upon them to found christian schools. "Dear sirs," said he, "we annually expend so much money on arquebuses, roads, and dikes, why should we not spend a little to give one or two schoolmasters to our poor children? God stands at the door and knocks; blessed are we if we open to him! Now the Word of God abounds. O my dear Germans, buy, buy, while the market is open before your houses. The Word of God and his grace are like a shower that falls and passes away. It was among the Jews; but it passed away, and now they have it no longer. Paul carried it into Greece; but in that country also it has passed away, and the Turk reigns there now. It came to Rome and the Latin empire; but there also it has passed away, and Rome now has the pope. O Germans, do not expect to have this Word for ever. The contempt that is shown to it will drive it away. For this reason, let him who desires to possess it lay hold of it and keep it!

"Busy yourselves with the children," continues Luther, still addressing the magistrates; "for many parents are like ostriches; they are hardened towards their little ones, and, satisfied with having laid the egg, they care nothing for it afterwards. The prosperity of a city does not consist merely in heaping up great treasures, in building strong walls, in erecting splendid mansions, in possessing glittering arms. If madmen fall upon it, its ruin will only be the greater. The true wealth of a city, its safety, and its strength, is to have many learned, serious, worthy, well educated citizens. And whom must we blame, because there are so few at present, except you magistrates, who have allowed our youth to grew up like trees in a forest?"

Luther particularly insisted on the necessity of studying literature and languages: "What use is there, it may be asked, in learning Latin, Greek, and Hebrew? We can read the Bible very well in German. Without languages," replies he, "we could not have received the Gospel Languages are the scabbard that contains the sword of the Spirit; they are the casket that guards the jewels; they are the vessel that holds the wine; and, as the Gospel says, they are the baskets in which the loaves and fishes are kept to feed the multitude. If we neglect the languages, we shall not only eventually lose the Gospel, but be unable to speak or write in Latin or in German. No sooner did men cease to cultivate them than Christendom declined, even until it fell under the power of the pope. But now that languages are again honoured, they shed such light that all the world is astonished, and every one is forced to acknowledge that our Gospel is almost as pure as that of the apostles themselves. In former times the holy Fathers were frequently mistaken, because they were ignorant of languages; and in our days there are some who, like the Waldenses, do not think the languages to be of any use; but although their doctrine be good, they have often erred in the real meaning of the sacred text; they are without arms against error, and I fear very much that their faith will not remain pure. If the languages had not made me positive as to the meaning of the Word, I might have been a pious monk, and quietly preached the truth in obscurity of a cloister; but I should have left the pope, the sophists, and their anti-christian empire still unshaken."

Luther did not concern himself about the education of the clergy only; it was his desire that knowledge should not be confined to the Church; he proposed extending it to the laity, who hitherto had been deprived of it. He called for the establishment of libraries, which should comprise not only editions and commentaries of the schoolmen and of the fathers of the Church, but also the works of orators and poets, even were they heathens, as well as writings devoted to the fine arts, law, medicine, and history. "These productions," said he, "serve to make known the works and the wonders of God."

This effort on the part of Luther is one of the most important produced by the Reformation. He emancipated learning from the hands of the priests, who had monopolised it like those of Egypt in times of old, and put it within the reach of all. From this impulse given by the Reformation have proceeded the greatest developments of modern times. Those laymen, whether men of letters or scholars, who now revile the Reformation, forget that they themselves are its offspring, and that, without it, they would still be, like ignorant children, under the rod of the clergy. The Reformation perceived the close tie that connected all the sciences; it saw that, as all knowledge is derived from God, it leads man back to God. It desired that all men should learn, and that they should learn everything. "Those who despise profane

literature," said Melancthon, "hold theology in no greater estimation. Their contempt is a mere pretext, with which they seek to conceal their idleness."

The Reformation was not satisfied with merely giving a strong impulse to letters; it gave also a fresh impulse to the arts. Protestantism has often been reproached as their enemy, and many Protestants willingly accept this reproach. We will not inquire whether the Reformation ought to glory in it or not; we shall be content to observe that impartial history does not confirm the fact on which this accusation is founded. Let Roman Catholicism pride itself in being more favourable to the arts than Protestantism; be it so: paganism was still more favourable, and Protestantism places its glory elsewhere. There are some religions in which the esthetic tendencies of man hold a more important place than his moral nature. Christianity is distinct from these religions, inasmuch as the moral element is its essence. The christian sentiment is manifested not by the productions of the fine arts, but by the works of a christian life. Every sect that should abandon this moral tendency of Christianity, would by that very circumstance forfeit its claims to the name of christian. Rome has not entirely abandoned it, but Protestantism cherishes this essential characteristic with much greater purity. It places its glory in diving into all that concerns the moral being, in judging of religious actions, not by their external beauty and the manner in which they strike the imagination, but according to their internal worth, and the connection they have with the conscience; so that if the papacy is above all an esthetical religion, as a celebrated writer has proved it to be, Protestantism is above all a moral religion.

And yet, although the Reformation at first addressed man as a moral being, it addressed the whole man. We have just seen how it spoke to his understanding and what it did for literature; it also spoke to his sensibility, to his imagination, and contributed to the development of the arts. The Church was no longer composed exclusively of monks and priests; it was the assembly of the faithful. All were to take part in its public worship; and the chanting of the clergy was to be succeeded by the singing of the people. Accordingly Luther, in translating the Psalms, thought of adapting them to congregational singing. Thus a taste for music was spread among the nation.

"Next to theology," said Luther, "I give the first place and the highest honour to music. A schoolmaster should know how to sing," said he at another time, "or else I will not so much as look at him." One day, as certain of his friends were singing some beautiful chants at his house, he exclaimed with enthusiasm: "If our Lord God has scattered such admirable gifts on this earth, which is but a dark corner, what will it not be in the life eternal, in which all will be perfection!" Since Luther's time, the people have sung; the Bible inspired their songs, and the impulse given at the epoch

of the Reformation produced in later years those noble oratories which seem to be the summit of this art.

Poetry shared in the general movement. In singing the praises of God, men could not confine themselves to mere translations of the ancient hymns. The souls of Luther and many of his contemporaries, elevated by faith to the sublimest ideas, excited to enthusiasm by the conflicts and dangers that continually threatened the infant Church, inspired by the poetic genius of the Old Testament, and by the faith of the New, soon poured forth their feelings in religious songs, in which poetry and music united and blended their most heavenly features. Thus in the sixteenth century the hymns were revived which in the first century had consoled the pangs of the martyrs. In 1523, Luther, as we have already seen, consecrated them to the memory of the Brussels martyrs; other children of the Reformation imitated his example; these hymns increased in number, and were circulated rapidly among the people, and contributed powerfully to awaken them from their slumbers. It was in this same year that Hans Sachs composed The Nightingale of Wittenberg. The doctrine that for the last four centuries had prevailed in the Church was as the moonlight, during which men lost their way in the wilderness. Now the nightingale proclaims the dawn, and, soaring above the mists of the morning, celebrates the brightness of the coming day.

While lyric poetry thus owed its birth to the loftiest inspirations of the Reformation, satirical verses and dramas from the pen of Hutten and Manuel attacked the most crying abuses.

It is to the Reformation that the greatest poets of England, Germany, and perhaps of France, are indebted for their highest flights. Of all the arts, painting is that on which the Reformation had the least influence. Nevertheless, it was renovated, and as it were sanctified, by the universal movement which at that time agitated all the powers of man. Lucas Cranach, the great master of that age, settled at Wittenberg, lived on intimate terms with Luther, and became the painter of the Reformation. We have seen how he represented the contrast between Christ and Antichrist (the pope), and thus ranked among the most influential organs of the revolution that was transforming the nations. As soon as he had received new convictions, he consecrated his chaste pencil solely to paintings in harmony with christian sentiments, and spread over groups of children, blessed by our Saviour, those graces with which he had previously adorned legendary saints. Albert Durer also was gained over by the Word of the Gospel, and his genius received a fresh impulse. His masterpieces date from this period. We see from the touches with which he henceforward depicted the evangelists and apostles, that the Bible was restored to the people, and that the

painter thence derived a depth, power, life, and sublimity, that he would never have found in himself.

And yet we must confess that of all the arts painting is that whose religious influence is most exposed to well-founded and strong objections. Poetry and music come from heaven, and will be found again in heaven; but we continually see painting connected with serious immoralities or mournful errors. After a man has studied history or visited Italy, he expects nothing beneficial to humanity from this art. Whatever may be the value of this exception which we think it our duty to make, our general remark still holds good.

The Reformation of Germany, while it primarily addressed man's moral nature, gave an impulse to the arts that they had not yet received from Roman Catholicism.

Thus everything advanced; arts, literature, spirituality of worship, and the minds of princes and people. But this noble harmony which the Gospel at its revival everywhere called forth, was about to be disturbed. The songs of the Wittenberg nightingale were to be interrupted by the howling of the tempest and the roaring of lions. In a moment a cloud overspread all Germany, and a glorious day was followed by the deepest darkness.

CHAPTER 10

Political Ferment—Luther against Rebellion—Thomas Munzer—Agitation—The Black Forest—The twelve Articles—Luther's Opinion—Helfenstein—March of the Peasants—March of the Imperial Army—Defeat of the Peasants—Cruelty of the Princes

A political ferment, very different from that produced by the Gospel, had long been at work in the empire. The people, bowed down by civil and ecclesiastical oppression, bound in many countries to the seigneurial estates, and transferred from hand to hand along with them, threatened to rise with fury and at last to break their chains. This agitation had shown itself long before the Reformation by many symptoms, and even then the religious element was blended with the political; in the sixteenth century it was impossible to separate these two principles, so closely associated in the existence of nations. In Holland, at the close of the preceding century, the peasants had revolted, placing on their banners, by way of arms, a loaf and a cheese, the two great blessings of these poor people. "The Alliance of the Shoes," had shown itself in the neighbourhood of Spires in 1502. In 1513, it appeared again in Brisgau, being encouraged by the priests. In 1514, Wurtemberg had seen the "League of Poor Conrad," whose aim was to maintain by rebellion "the right of God." In 1515, Carinthia and Hungary had been the theatre of terrible agitations. These seditions had been quenched in torrents of blood; but no relief had been accorded to the people. A political reform, therefore, was not less necessary than a religious reform. The people were entitled to this; but we must acknowledge that they were not ripe for its enjoyment.

Since the commencement of the Reformation, these popular disturbances had not been renewed; men's minds were occupied by other thoughts. Luther, whose piercing glance had discerned the condition of the people, had already from the summit of the Wartburg addressed them in serious exhortations calculated to restrain their agitated minds:—

"Rebellion," he had said, "never produces the amelioration we desire, and God condemns it. What is it to rebel, if it be not to avenge oneself? The devil is striving to excite to revolt those who embrace the Gospel, in order to cover it with opprobrium; but those who have rightly understood my doctrine do not revolt."

Everything gave cause to fear that the popular agitation could not be restrained much longer. The government that Frederick of Saxony had taken such pains to form, and which possessed the confidence of the nation, was dissolved. The emperor, whose

energy might have been an efficient substitute for the influence of this national administration, was absent; the princes whose union had always constituted the strength of Germany were divided; and the new declaration of Charles V against Luther, by removing every hope of future harmony, deprived the reformer of part of the moral influence by which in 1522 he had succeeded in calming the storm. The chief barriers that hitherto had confined the torrent being broken, nothing could any longer restrain its fury.

It was not the religious movement that gave birth to political agitations; but in many places it was carried away by their impetuous waves. Perhaps we should even go further, and acknowledge that the movement communicated to the people by the Reformation gave fresh strength to the discontent fermenting in the nation. The violence of Luther's writings, the intrepidity of his actions and language, the harsh truths that he spoke, not only to the pope and prelates, but also to the princes themselves, must all have contributed to inflame minds that were already in a state of excitement. Accordingly, Erasmus did not fail to tell him: "We are now reaping the fruits that you have sown." And further, the cheering truths of the Gospel, at last brought to light, stirred all hearts, and filled them with anticipation and hope. But many unregenerated souls were not prepared by repentance for the faith and liberty of Christians. They were very willing to throw off the papal yoke, but they would not take up the yoke of Christ. And hence, when princes devoted to the cause of Rome endeavoured in their wrath to stifle the Reformation, real Christians patiently endured these cruel persecutions; but the multitude resisted and broke out, and seeing their desires checked in one direction, gave vent to them in another.

"Why," said they, "should slavery be perpetuated in the state, while the Church invites all men to a glorious liberty? Why should governments rule only by force, when the Gospel preaches nothing but gentleness?" Unhappily at a time when the religious reform was received with equal joy both by princes and people, the political reform, on the contrary, had the most powerful part of the nation against it; and while the former had the Gospel for its rule and support, the latter had soon no other principles than violence and despotism. Accordingly, while the one was confined within the bounds of truth, the other rapidly, like an impetuous torrent, overstepped all limits of justice. But to shut one's eyes against the indirect influence of the Reformation on the troubles that broke out in the empire, would betoken partiality. A fire had been kindled in Germany by religious discussions, from which it was impossible to prevent a few sparks escaping which were calculated to inflame the passions of the people.

The claims of a few fanatics to Divine inspiration increased the evil. While the Reformation had continually appealed from the pretended authority of the Church to

the real authority of the Holy Scriptures, these enthusiasts not only rejected the authority of the Church, but of Scripture also; they spoke only of an inner Word, of an internal revelation from God; and overlooking the natural corruption of their hearts, they gave way to all the intoxication of spiritual pride, and fancied they were saints.

"To them the Holy Scriptures were but a dead letter," said Luther, "and they all began to cry, The Spirit! the Spirit! But most assuredly I will not follow where their spirit leads them. May God of his mercy preserve me from a Church in which there are none but saints. I desire to dwell with the humble, the feeble, the sick, who know and feel their sins, and who groan and cry continually to God from the bottom of their hearts to obtain his consolation and support."

These words of Luther's have great depth of meaning, and point out the change that was taking place in his views as to the nature of the Church. They indicate at the same time how contrary were the religious opinions of the rebels to those of the Reformation.

The most notorious of these enthusiasts was Thomas Munzer; he was not devoid of talent, had read his Bible, was zealous, and might have done good, if he had been able to collect his agitated thoughts and find peace of heart. But as he did not know himself, and was wanting in true humility, he was possessed with a desire of reforming the world, and forgot, as all enthusiasts do, that the reformation should begin with himself. Some mystical writings that he had read in his youth had given a false direction to his mind. He first appeared at Zwickau, quitted Wittenberg after Luther's return, dissatisfied with the inferior part he was playing, and became pastor of the small town of Alstadt in Thuringia. He could not long remain quiet, and accused the reformers of founding, by their adherence to the letter, a new popery, and of forming churches which were not pure and holy.

"Luther," said he, "has delivered men's consciences from the yoke of the pope, but he has left them in a carnal liberty, and not led them in spirit towards God."

He considered himself as called of God to remedy this great evil. The revelations of the Spirit were in his eyes the means by which his reform was to be effected. "He who possesses this Spirit," said he, "possesses the true faith, although he should never see the Scriptures in his life. Heathens and Turks are better fitted to receive it than many Christians who style us enthusiasts." It was Luther whom he here had in view. "To receive this Spirit we must mortify the flesh," said he at another time, "wear tattered clothing, let the beard grow, be of a sad countenance, keep silence, retire into

desert places, and supplicate God to give us a sign of his favour. Then God will come and speak with us, as formerly He spoke with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. If He were not to do so, He would not deserve our attention. I have received from God the commission to gather together his elect into a holy and eternal alliance."

The agitation and ferment which were at work in men's minds were but too favourable to the dissemination of these enthusiastic ideas. Man loves the marvelous, and whatever flatters his pride. Munzer, having persuaded a part of his flock to adopt his views, abolished ecclesiastical singing and all other ceremonies. He maintained that obedience to princes "void of understanding," was at once to serve God and Belial. Then marching out at the head of his parishioners to a chapel in the vicinity of Alstadt, whither pilgrims from all quarters were accustomed to resort, he pulled it down. After this exploit, being compelled to leave that neighbourhood, he wandered about Germany, and went as far as Switzerland, carrying with him, and communicating to all who would listen to him, the plan of a general revolution. Everywhere he found men's minds prepared; he threw gunpowder on the burning coals, and the explosion forthwith took place.

Luther, who had rejected the warlike enterprises of Sickengen, could not be led away by the tumultuous movements of the peasantry. Fortunately for social order, the Gospel preserved him; for what would have happened had he carried his extensive influence into their camp? He ever firmly maintained the distinction between secular and spiritual things; he continually repeated that it was immortal souls which Christ emancipated by his Word; and if, with one hand, he attacked the authority of the Church, with the other he upheld with equal power the authority of the princes. "A Christian," said he, "should endure a hundred deaths, rather than meddle in the slightest degree with the revolt of the peasants." He wrote to the elector: "It causes me especial joy that these enthusiasts themselves boast, to all who are willing to listen to them, that they do not belong to us. The Spirit urges them on, say they; and I reply, it is an evil spirit, for he bears no other fruit than the pillage of convents and churches; the greatest highway robbers upon earth might do as much."

At the same time, Luther, who desired that others should enjoy the liberty he claimed for himself, dissuaded the prince from all measures of severity: "Let them preach what they please, and against whom they please," said he; "for it is the Word of God that must march in front of the battle and fight against them. If their spirit be the true Spirit, he will not fear our severity; if ours is the true one, he will not fear their violence. Let us leave the spirits to struggle and contend with one another. Perhaps some persons may be led astray; there is no battle without wounds; but he

who fighteth faithfully shall be crowned. Nevertheless, if they desire to take up the sword, let your highness forbid it, and order them to quit the country."

The insurrection began in the Black Forest, and near the sources of the Danube, so frequently the theatre of popular commotions. On the 19th of July 1524, some Thurgovian peasants rose against the Abbot of Reichenau, who would not accord them an evangelical preacher. Erelong thousands were collected round the small town of Tengen, to liberate an ecclesiastic who was there imprisoned. The revolt spread with inconceivable rapidity from Swabia as far as the Rhenish provinces, Franconia, Thuringia, and Saxony. In the month of January 1525, all these countries were in a state of rebellion.

About the end of this month, the peasants published a declaration in twelve articles, in which they claimed the liberty of choosing their own pastors, the abolition of small tithes, of slavery, and of fines on inheritance, the right to hunt, fish, and cut wood, &c. Each demand was backed by a passage from Holy Writ, and they said in conclusion, "If we are deceived, let Luther correct us by Scripture." The opinions of the Wittenberg divines were consulted. Luther and Melancthon delivered theirs separately, and they both gave evidence of the difference of their characters. Melancthon, who thought every kind of disturbance a crime, oversteps the limits of his usual gentleness, and cannot find language strong enough to express his indignation. The peasants are criminals, against whom he invokes all laws human and Divine. If friendly negotiation is unavailing, the magistrates should hunt them down, as if they were robbers and assassins. "And yet," adds he (and we require at least one feature to remind us of Melancthon), "let them take pity on the orphans when having recourse to the penalty of death!"

Luther's opinion of the revolt was the same as Melancthon's; but he had a heart that beat for the miseries of the people. On this occasion he manifested a dignified impartiality, and spoke the truth frankly to both parties. He first addressed the princes, and more especially the bishops:—

"It is you," said he, "who are the cause of this revolt; it is your clamours against the Gospel, your guilty oppressions of the poor, that have driven the people to despair. It is not the peasants, my dear Lords, that rise up against you,—it is God himself who opposes your madness. The peasants are but the instruments he employs to humble you. Do not imagine you can escape the punishment he is preparing for you. Even should you have succeeded in destroying all these peasants, God is able from the very stones to raise up others to chastise your pride. If I desired revenge, I might laugh in my sleeve, and look on while the peasants were carrying on their work, or even

increase their fury; but may God preserve me from such thoughts! My dear Lords, put away your indignation, treat these poor peasants as a man of sense treats people who are drunk or insane. Quiet these commotions by mildness, lest a conflagration should arise and burn all Germany. Among these twelve articles there are certain demands which are just and equitable."

This prologue was calculated to conciliate the peasants' confidence in Luther, and to make them listen patiently to the truths he had to tell them. He represented to them that the greater number of their demands were well founded; but that to revolt was to act like heathens; that the duty of a Christian is to be patient, not to fight; that if they persisted in revolting against the Gospel in the name of the Gospel, he should look upon them as more dangerous enemies than the pope. "The pope and the emperor," continued he, "combined against me; but the more they blustered the more did the Gospel gain ground And why was this? Because I have never drawn the sword or called for vengeance; because I never had recourse to tumult or insurrection: I relied wholly upon God, and placed everything in His almighty hands. Christians fight not with swords or arquebuses, but with sufferings and with the cross. Christ, their Captain, handled not the sword.....he was hung upon a tree."

But to no purpose did Luther employ this christian language. The people were too much excited by the fanatical speeches of the leaders of the insurrection, to listen, as of old, to the words of the reformer. "He is playing the hypocrite," said they; "he flatters the nobles. He has declared war against the pope, and yet wishes us to submit to our oppressors."

The revolt, instead of dying away, became more formidable. At Weinsberg, Count Louis of Helfenstein and the seventy men under his orders were condemned to death by the rebels. A body of peasants drew up with their pikes lowered, whilst others drove the count and his soldiers against this wall of steel. The wife of the wretched Helfenstein, a natural daughter of the Emperor Maximilian, holding an infant two years old in her arms, knelt before them, and with loud cries begged for her husband's life, and vainly endeavoured to arrest this march of murder; a boy who had been in the count's service, and had joined the rebels, capered gaily before him, and played the dead march upon his fife, as if he had been leading his victims in a dance. All perished; the child was wounded in its mother's arms; and she herself thrown upon a dung-cart, and thus conveyed to Heilbrunn.

At the news of these cruelties, a cry of horror was heard from the friends of the Reformation, and Luther's feeling heart underwent a terrible conflict. On the one hand the peasants, ridiculing his advice, pretended to receive revelations from

heaven, made an impious use of the threatenings of the Old Testament, proclaimed an equality of ranks and a community of goods, defended their cause with fire and [381] sword, and indulged in barbarous atrocities. On the other hand, the enemies of the Reformation asked the reformer, with a malicious sneer, if he did not know that it was easier to kindle a fire than to extinguish it. Shocked at these excesses, alarmed at the thought that they might check the progress of the Gospel, Luther hesitated no longer, no longer temporized; he inveighed against the insurgents with all the energy of his character, and perhaps overstepped the just bounds within which he should have contained himself.

"The peasants," said he, "commit three horrible sins against God and man, and thus deserve the death of body and soul. First, they revolt against their magistrates to whom they have sworn fidelity; next, they rob and plunder convents and castles; and lastly, they veil their crimes with the cloak of the Gospel. If you do not put a mad dog to death, you will perish, and all the country with you. Whoever is killed fighting for the magistrates will be a true martyr, if he has fought with a good conscience." Luther then gives a powerful description of the guilty violence of the peasants who force simple and peaceable men to join their alliance, and thus drag them to the same condemnation. He then adds: "For this reason, my dear Lords, help, save, deliver, have pity on these poor people. Let every one strike, pierce, and kill, who is able If thou diest, thou canst not meet a happier death; for thou diest in the service of God, and to save thy neighbour from hell."

Neither gentleness nor violence could arrest the popular torrent. The church-bells were no longer rung for divine service; whenever their deep and prolonged sounds were heard in the fields, it was the tocsin, and all ran to arms. The people of the Black Forest had rallied round John Muller of Bulgenbach. With an imposing aspect, covered with a red cloak, and wearing a red cap, this leader boldly advanced from village to village followed by the peasantry. Behind him, on a wagon decorated with ribands and branches of trees, was raised the tricolour flag, black, red, and white,—the signal of revolt.

A herald, dressed in the same colours, read the twelve articles, and invited the people to join in the rebellion. Whoever refused was banished from the community.

Erelong this march, which at first was peaceable, became more disquieting. "We must compel the lords to submit to our alliance," exclaimed they. And to induce them to do so, they plundered the granaries, emptied the cellars, drew the seigneurial fish-ponds, demolished the castles of the nobles who resisted, and burnt the convents.

Opposition had inflamed the passions of those rude men; equality no longer satisfied them; they thirsted for blood, and swore to put to death every man who wore a spur.

At the approach of the peasants, the cities that were unable to resist them opened their gates and joined them. In whatever place they entered, they pulled down the images and broke the crucifixes; armed women paraded the streets and threatened the monks. If they were defeated in one quarter, they assembled again in another, and braved the most formidable forces. A committee of peasants was established at Heilbrunn. The Counts of Lowenstein were taken prisoners, dressed in a smock-frock, and then, a white staff having been placed in their hands, they were compelled to swear to the twelve articles. "Brother George, and thou, brother Albert," said a tinker of Ohringen to the Counts of Hohenlohe, who had gone to their camp, "swear to conduct yourselves as our brethren; for you also are now peasants; you are no longer lords." Equality of rank, the dream of many democrats, was established in aristocratic Germany. Many nobles, some through fear, others from ambition, then joined the insurgents. The famous Goetz von Berlichingen, finding his vassals refuse to obey him, desired to flee to the Elector of Saxony; but his wife, who was lying-in, wishing to keep him near her, concealed the elector's answer. Goetz, being closely pursued, was compelled to put himself at the head of the rebel army. On the 7th of May the peasants entered Wurtzburg, where the citizens received them with acclamations. The forces of the princes and knights of Swabia and Franconia, which had assembled in this city, evacuated it, and retired in confusion to the citadel, the last bulwark of the nobility.

But the movement had already extended to other parts of Germany. Spires, the Palatinate, Alsace, and Hesse accepted the twelve articles, and the peasants threatened Bavaria, Westphalia, the Tyrol, Saxony, and Lorraine. The Margrave of Baden, having rejected the articles, was compelled to flee. The coadjutor of Fulda acceded to them with a smile. The smaller towns said, they had no lances with which to oppose the insurgents. Mentz, Treves, and Frankfort obtained the liberties which they had claimed.

An immense revolution was preparing in all the empire. The ecclesiastical and secular privileges, that bore so heavily on the peasants, were to be suppressed; the possessions of the clergy were to be secularized, to indemnify the princes and provide for the wants of the empire; taxes were to be abolished, with the exception of a tribute payable every ten years; the imperial power was to subsist alone, as being recognised by the New Testament; all the other princes were to cease to reign; sixty-four free tribunals were to be established, in which men of all classes should have a seat; all ranks were to return to their primitive condition; the clergy were [382] to be

henceforward merely the pastors of the churches; princes and knights were to be simply the defenders of the weak; uniformity in weights and measures was to be introduced, and only one kind of money was to coined throughout the empire.

Meanwhile the princes had shaken off their first lethargy, and George von Truchsess, commander-in-chief of the imperial army, was advancing on the side of the Lake of Constance. On the 2nd of May he defeated the peasants at Beblingen, marched on the town of Weinsberg, where the unhappy Count of Helfenstein had perished, burnt and razed it to the ground, giving orders that the ruins should be left as an eternal monument of the treason of its inhabitants. At Furfeld he united with the Elector Palatine and the Elector of Treves, and all three moved towards Franconia.

The Frauenburg, the citadel of Wurtzburg, held out for the princes, and the main army of the peasants still lay before its walls. As soon as they heard of Truchsess' march, they resolved on an assault, and at nine o'clock at night on the 15th of May, the trumpets sounded, the tricolour flag was unfurled, and the peasants rushed to the attack with horrible shouts. Sebastian von Rotenhan, one of the warmest partisans of the Reformation, was governor of the castle. He had put the fortress in a formidable state of defense, and having exhorted the garrison to repel the assault with courage, the soldiers, holding up three fingers, had all sworn to do so. A most terrible conflict then took place. To the vigour and despair of the insurgents the fortress replied from its walls and towers by petards, showers of sulphur and boiling pitch, and the discharges of artillery. The peasants, thus struck by their unseen enemies, were staggered for a moment; but in an instant their fury grew more violent. The struggle was prolonged as the night advanced. The fortress, lit up by a thousand battle-fires, appeared in the darkness like a towering giant, who, vomiting flames, struggled alone amidst the roar of thunder for the salvation of the empire against the ferocious valor of these furious hordes. Two hours after midnight the peasants withdrew, having failed in all their efforts.

They now tried to enter into negotiations, either with the garrison or with Truchsess, who was advancing at the head of his army. But this was going out of their path; violence and victory alone could save them. After some little hesitation, they resolved to march against the imperial forces, but the cavalry and artillery made terrible havoc in their ranks. At Konigshofen, and afterwards at Engelstadt, those unfortunate creatures were totally defeated. The princes, nobles, and bishops, abusing their victory, indulged in the most unprecedented cruelties. The prisoners were hung on the trees by the wayside. The Bishop of Wurtzburg, who had run away, now returned, traversed his diocese accompanied by executioners, and watered it alike with the blood of the rebels and of the peaceful friends of the Word of God. Goetz

von Berlichingen was sentenced to imprisonment for life. The Margrave Casimir of Anspach put out the eyes of eighty-five insurgents, who had sworn that their eyes should never look upon that prince again; and he cast this troop of blinded individuals upon the world, who wandered up and down, holding each other by the hand, groping along, tottering, and begging their bread. The wretched boy, who had played the dead-march on his fife at the murder of Helfenstein, was chained to a post; a fire was kindled around him, and the knights looked on laughing at his horrible contortions.

Public worship was everywhere restored in its ancient forms. The most flourishing and populous districts of the empire exhibited to those who travelled through them nothing but heaps of dead bodies and smoking ruins. Fifty thousand men had perished, and the people lost nearly everywhere the little liberty they had hitherto enjoyed. Such was the horrible termination of this revolt in the south of Germany.

CHAPTER 11

Munzer at Mulhausen—Appeal to the People—March of the Princes—End of the Revolt—Influence of the Reformers—Sufferings—Changes—Two Results

But the evil was not confined to the south and west of Germany. Munzer, after having traversed a part of Switzerland, Alsace, and Swabia, had again directed his steps towards Saxony. A few citizens of Mulhausen, in Thuringia, had invited him to their city, and elected him pastor. The town-council having resisted, Munzer deposed it and nominated another, consisting of his friends, with himself at their head. Full of contempt for that Christ, "sweet as honey," whom Luther preached, and being resolved to employ the most energetic measures, he exclaimed: "Like Joshua, we must put all the Canaanites to the sword." He established a community of goods, and pillaged the convents. "Munzer," wrote Luther to Amsdorff on the 11th of April 1525, "Munzer is not only pastor, but king and emperor of Mulhausen."

The poor no longer worked; if anyone needed corn or cloth, he went and demanded it of some rich man; if the latter refused, the poor man took it by force; if he resisted, he was hung. As Mulhausen was an independent city, Munzer was able to exercise his power for nearly a year without opposition. The revolt in the south of Germany led him to imagine that it was time to extend his new kingdom. He had a number of heavy guns cast in the Franciscan convent, and endeavoured to raise the peasantry and miners of Mansfeldt. "How long will you sleep?" said he to them in a fanatical proclamation. "Arise and fight the battle of the Lord! The time is come. France, Germany, and Italy are moving. On, on, on!—Dran, Dran, Dran! Heed not the groans of the impious ones. They will implore you like children; but be pitiless.—Dran, Dran, Dran! The fire is burning: let your sword be ever warm with blood.—Dran, Dran, Dran! Work while it is yet day." The letter was signed "Munzer, servant of God against the wicked."

The country people, thirsting for plunder, flocked round his standard. Throughout all the districts of Mansfeldt, Stolberg, and Schwartzburg in Hesse, and the duchy of Brunswick, the peasantry rose in insurrection. The convents of Michelstein, Ilsenburg, Walkenried, Rossleben, and many others in the neighbourhood of the Hartz, or in the plains of Thuringia, were devastated. At Reinhardsbrunn, which Luther had visited, the tombs of the ancient landgraves were profaned, and the liberty destroyed.

Terror spread far and wide. Even at Wittenberg some anxiety was felt. Those doctors, who had feared neither the emperor nor the pope, trembled in the presence

of a madman. They were always on the watch for news, and every step of the rebels was counted. "We are here in great danger," said Melancthon. "If Munzer succeeds, it is all over with us, unless Christ should rescue us. Munzer advances with a worse than Scythian cruelty, and it is impossible to repeat his dreadful threats."

The pious elector had long hesitated what he should do. Munzer had exhorted him and all the princes to be converted, because (said he) their hour was come; and he had signed these letters: "Munzer, armed with the sword of Gideon." Frederick would have desired to reclaim these misguided men by gentle measures. On the 14th of April, when he was dangerously ill, he had written to his brother John: "We may have given these wretched people more than one cause for insurrection. Alas! the poor are oppressed in many ways by their spiritual and temporal lords." And when his attention was directed to the humiliation, the revolutions, the dangers to which he would expose himself, unless he promptly stifled the rebellion, he replied: "Hitherto I have been a mighty elector, having chariots and horses in abundance; if it be God's pleasure to take them from me now, I will go on foot."

The youthful Philip, landgrave of Hesse, was the first of the princes who took up arms. His knights and soldiers swore to live and die with him. After pacifying his own states, he directed his march towards Saxony. On their side, Duke John, the elector's brother, Duke George of Saxony, and Duke Henry of Brunswick, advanced and united their troops with those of Hesse. The peasants, terrified at the sight of this army, fled to a small hill, where, without any discipline, without arms, and for the most part without courage, they formed a rampart with their wagons. Munzer had not even prepared ammunition for his large guns. No succors appeared; the rebels were hemmed in by the army; they lost all confidence. The princes, taking pity on them, offered them propositions which they appeared willing to accept. Upon this Munzer had recourse to the most powerful lever that enthusiasm can put in motion. "Today we shall behold the arm of the Lord," said he, "and all our enemies shall be destroyed." At this moment a rainbow appeared over their heads; the fanatical host, who carried a rainbow on their flags, beheld in it a sure prognostic of the Divine protection. Munzer took advantage of it: "Fear nothing," said he to the citizens and peasants: "I will catch all their balls in my sleeve." At the same time he cruelly put to death a young gentleman, Maternus von Geholfen, an envoy from the princes, in order to deprive the insurgents of all hope of pardon. The landgrave, having assembled his horsemen, said to them:

"I well know that we princes are often in fault, for we are but men; but God commands all men to honour the powers that be. Let us save our wives and children from the fury of these murderers. The Lord will give us the victory, for he has said:

Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." Philip then gave the signal of attack. It was the 15th of May 1525. The army was put in motion; but the peasant host stood immovable, singing the hymn, "Come, Holy Ghost," and waiting for Heaven to declare in their favour. The artillery soon broke down their rude rampart, carrying dismay and death into the midst of the insurgents. Their fanaticism and courage at once forsook them; they were seized with a panic-terror, and ran away in disorder. Five thousand perished in the flight.

After the battle the princes and their victorious troops entered Frankenhausen. A soldier, who had gone into a loft in the house where he was quartered, found a man in bed. "Who art thou," asked he; "art thou one of the rebels?" Then observing a pocket-book, he took it up, and found several letters addressed to Thomas Munzer. "Art thou Munzer?" demanded the trooper. The sick man answered "No." But as the soldier uttered dreadful threats, Munzer, for it was really he, confessed who he was. "Thou art my prisoner," said the horseman. When Munzer was taken before Duke George and the landgrave, he persevered in saying that he was right to chastise the princes, since they opposed the Gospel. "Wretched man!" replied they, "think of all those of whose death you have been the cause." But he answered, smiling in the midst of his anguish: "They would have it so!" He took the sacrament under one kind, and was beheaded at the same time with Pfeiffer, his lieutenant. Mulhausen was taken, and the peasants were loaded with chains.

A nobleman having observed among the crowd of prisoners a peasant of favourable appearance, went up and said to him: "Well, my man, which government do you like best—that of the peasants or of the princes?" The poor fellow made answer with a deep sigh: "Ah, my lord, no knife cuts so deep as the rule of peasant over his fellows."

The relics of the insurrection were quenched in blood; Duke George, in particular, acted with the greatest severity. In the states of the elector, there were neither executions nor punishment. The Word of God, preached in all its purity, had shown its power to restrain the tumultuous passions of the people.

From the very beginning, indeed, Luther had not ceased to struggle against the rebellion, which was, in his opinion, the forerunner of the judgment-day. Advice, prayers, and even irony had not been spared. At the end of the articles drawn up at Erfurth by the rebels, he had subjoined, as a supplementary article: "Item, The following article has been omitted. Henceforward the honourable council shall have no power; it shall do nothing; it shall sit like an idol or a log of wood; the commonalty shall chew its food, and it shall govern with its hands and feet tied; henceforth the

wagon shall guide the horses, the horses shall hold the reins, and we shall go on admirably, in conformity with the glorious system set forth in these articles."

Luther did not confine himself to writing. While the disturbance was still at its height, he quitted Wittenberg and went through some of the districts where the agitation was greatest. He preached, he laboured to soften his hearers' hearts, and his hand, to which God had given power, turned aside, quieted, and brought back the impetuous and overflowing torrents into their natural channels.

In every quarter the doctors of the Reformation exerted a similar influence. At Halle, Brentz had revived the drooping spirits of the citizens by the promises of God's Word, and four thousand peasants had fled before six hundred citizens. At Ichterhausen, a mob of peasants having assembled with an intent to demolish several castles and put their lords to death, Frederick Myconius went out to them alone, and such was the power of his words, that they immediately abandoned their design.

Such was the part taken by the reformers and the Reformation in the midst of this revolt; they contended against it with all their might, with the sword of the Word, and boldly maintained those principles which alone, in every age, can preserve order and subjection among the nations. Accordingly, Luther asserted that if the power of sound doctrine had not checked the fury of the people, the revolt would have extended its ravages far more widely, and have overthrown both Church and State. Everything leads us to believe that these melancholy prognostics would have been realised.

If the reformers thus contended against sedition, it was not without receiving grievous wounds. That moral agony which Luther had first suffered in his cell at Erfurth, became still more serious after the insurrection of the peasants. No great change takes place among men without suffering on the part of those who are its instruments. The birth of Christianity was effected by the agony of the cross; but He who hung upon that cross addressed these words to each of his disciples: Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptised with the same baptism that I am baptised with?

On the side of the princes, it was continually repeated that Luther and his doctrine were the cause of the revolt, and, however absurd this idea may be, the reformer could not see it so generally entertained without experiencing the deepest grief. On the side of the people, Munzer and all the leaders of the insurrection represented him as a vile hypocrite, a flatterer of the great, and these calumnies easily obtained belief. The violence with which Luther had declared against the rebels had displeased even moderate men. The friends of Rome exulted; all were against

him, and he bore the heavy anger of his times. But his greatest affliction was to behold the work of heaven thus dragged in the mire, and classed with the most fanatical projects. Here he felt was his Gethsemane: he saw the bitter cup that was presented to him; and foreboding that he would be forsaken by all, he exclaimed: "Soon, perhaps, I also shall be able to say: All ye shall be offended because of me this night."

Yet in the midst of this deep bitterness, he preserved his faith: "He who has given me power to trample the enemy under foot," said he, "when he rose up against me like a cruel dragon or a furious lion, will not permit this enemy to crush me, now that he appears before me with the treacherous glance of the basilisk. I groan as I contemplate those calamities. Often have I asked myself, whether it would not have been better to have allowed the papacy to go on quietly, rather than witness the occurrence of so many troubles and seditions in the world. But no! it is better to have snatched a few souls from the jaws of the devil, than to have left them all between his murderous fangs."

Now terminated the revolution in Luther's mind that had begun at the period of his return from the Wartburg. The inner life no longer satisfied him: the Church and her institutions now became most important in his eyes. The boldness with which he had thrown down everything was checked at the sight of still more sweeping destructions; he felt it his duty to preserve, govern, and build up; and from the midst of the blood-stained ruins with which the peasant war had covered all Germany, the edifice of the new Church began slowly to arise.

These disturbances left a lasting and deep impression on men's minds. The nations had been struck with dismay. The masses, who had sought in the Reformation nothing but political reform, withdrew from it of their own accord, when they saw it offered them spiritual liberty only. Luther's opposition to the peasants was his renunciation of the ephemeral favour of the people. A seeming tranquillity was soon established, and the noise of enthusiasm and sedition was followed in all Germany by a silence inspired by terror.

Thus the popular passions, the cause of revolution, the interests of a radical equality, were quelled in the empire; but the Reformation did not yield. These two movements, which many have confounded with each other, were clearly marked out by the difference of their results. The insurrection was from below; the Reformation from above. A few horsemen and cannons were sufficient to put down the one; but the other never ceased to rise in strength and vigor, in despite of the reiterated assaults of the empire and the Church.

CHAPTER 12

Death of the Elector Frederick—The Prince and the Reformer—Roman-catholic Alliance—Plans of Charles the Fifth—Dangers

Meanwhile the cause of the Reformation itself appeared as if it would perish in the gulf that had swallowed up the liberties of the people. A melancholy event seemed destined to accelerate its fall. At the moment when the princes were marching against Munzer, and ten days before his defeat, the aged Elector of Saxony, that man whom God had raised up to defend the Reformation against all dangers from without, descended to the tomb.

His strength diminished day by day; the horrors that accompanied the peasant war wrung his feeling heart. "Alas!" exclaimed he with a deep sigh, "if it were God's will, I should die with joy. I see neither love, nor truth, nor faith, nor any good remaining upon earth."

Averting his eyes from the struggles then prevailing throughout Germany, this pious prince, who was at that time residing in the castle of Lochau, tranquilly prepared to depart. On the 4th of May he called for his chaplain, the faithful Spalatin: "You do right to come and see me," said he mildly, as the chaplain entered: "for it is our duty to visit the sick." Then ordering his couch to be wheelled towards the table near which Spalatin was sitting, he bade his attendants leave the room, and then affectionately taking his friend's hand, spoke with him familiarly about Luther, the peasants, and his approaching departure. Spalatin came again at eight in the evening; the aged prince then unburdened his soul, and confessed his sins in the presence of God. On the morrow, it was the 5th of May, he received the communion under both kinds. No member of his family was near him; his brother and his nephew were gone with the army; but his domestics stood around him, according to the ancient custom of those times. As they gazed on that venerable prince, whom it had been so sweet a task to serve, they all burst into tears. "My little children," said he tenderly, "if I have offended anyone of you, forgive me for the love of God; for we princes often give offence to the poor, and that is wrong." Thus did Frederick obey the injunction of the apostle: Let him that is rich rejoice in that he is made low; because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

Spalatin did not leave him again; he set before him the rich promises of the Gospel, and the pious elector drank in its powerful consolations with indescribable peace. The doctrine of the Gospel was no longer to him that sword which attacks error, following it up [386] wherever it may be found, and after a vigorous contest

triumphing over it at last; it fell upon his heart like the dew, or the gentle rain, filling it with hope and joy. Frederick had forgotten the present world: he saw nothing but God and eternity.

Feeling the rapid approach of death, he destroyed a will that he had made some years before, and in which he had commended his soul to "the mother of God;" and dictated another, in which he called upon the holy and the sole merits of Jesus Christ "for the forgiveness of his sins," and declared his firm assurance "that he was redeemed by the precious blood of his beloved Saviour." He then added: "I can say no more!" and that evening, at five o'clock, he quietly fell asleep. "He was a child of peace," exclaimed his physician, "and in peace he has departed."—"O bitter death to all whom he has left behind him!" said Luther.

Luther, who was then travelling through Thuringia to allay the excitement, had never seen the elector, except at a distance, at Worms at the side of Charles the Fifth. But these two men had met in spirit from the very moment the reformer appeared. Frederick laboured for nationality and independence, as Luther did for truth and reformation. Unquestionably the Reformation was above all things a spiritual work; but it was perhaps necessary for its early success that it should be linked with some national interest. Accordingly Luther had no sooner risen up against indulgences than the alliance between the prince and the monk was tacitly concluded:—an alliance that was purely moral, without contract or writing, or even words, and in which the strong man lent no aid to the weak, but only allowed him to act. But now that the vigorous oak was cut down under whose shelter the Reformation had gradually grown up,—now that the enemies of the Gospel were everywhere manifesting fresh force and hatred, and that its supporters were compelled to hide themselves or remain silent, nothing seemed able to defend them any longer against the sword of those who were pursuing it with such violence.

The confederates of Ratisbon, who had conquered the peasants in the south and west of the empire, were in all parts attacking the Reformation and the revolt alike. At Wurtzburg and at Bamberg they put to death many of the most peaceable citizens, and even some of those who had resisted the peasants. "What matters it?" said they openly; "these people were attached to the Gospel." This was enough to make their heads fall on the scaffold.

Duke George hoped to impart his hatred and his affections to the landgrave and Duke John. "See," said he to them after the defeat of the peasants, as he pointed to the field of battle, "see what miseries Luther has occasioned!" John and Philip appeared to give him hopes that they would adopt his ideas. "Duke George," said the

reformer, "imagines he shall triumph, now that Frederick is dead; but Christ reigns in the midst of His enemies: in vain do they gnash their teeth, their desire shall perish."

George lost no time in forming a confederation in the north of Germany, similar to that of Ratisbon. The Electors of Mentz and Brandenburg, Dukes Henry and Erick of Brunswick, and Duke George, met at Dessau and concluded a Romish alliance in the month of July. George urged the new elector and his son-in-law the landgrave to join it. And then, as if to intimate what might be expected of it, he beheaded two citizens of Leipsic in whose house some of the reformer's writings had been found.

At the same time letters from Charles V, dated from Toledo, arrived in Germany, by which another diet was convoked at Augsburg. Charles wished to give the empire a constitution that would enable him to dispose of the forces of Germany at his good pleasure. Religious differences offered him the means; he had only to let loose the Catholics against the followers of the Gospel, and when they had exhausted their strength, he would easily triumph over both. Down with the Lutherans! was therefore the cry of the emperor.

Thus all things combined against the Reformation. Never had Luther's spirit been overwhelmed by so many fears. The remnants of Munzer's party had sworn to take his life; his sole protector was no more; Duke George, he was informed, intended to have him arrested in Wittenberg itself; the princes who might have defended him bowed their heads, and seemed to have forsaken the Gospel; it was rumoured that the university, the number of whose students was already diminished by these troubles, was about to be suppressed by the new elector; and Charles, victorious at Pavia, was assembling a new diet with the end of giving a deathblow to the Reformation. What dangers must not Luther have foreboded! This anguish, these inward struggles, that had so often tortured him to groans, now wrung his soul. How can he resist so many enemies? In the midst of these agitations, in the face of so many dangers, beside the corpse of Frederick that was scarcely cold, and the dead bodies of the peasants that yet strewed the plains of Germany, Luther—none could certainly have imagined such a thing—Luther married.

CHAPTER 13

The Nuns of Nimptsch—Luther's Sentiments—The Convent dissolved—Luther's Marriage—Domestic Happiness

In the monastery of Nimptsch, near Grimma in Saxony, dwelt in the year 1523 nine nuns, who were diligent in reading the Word of God, and who had discovered the contrast that exists between a christian and a cloistered life. Their names were Magdalen Staupitz, Eliza Canitz, Ava Grossen, Ava and Margaret Schonfeldt, Laneta Golis, Margaret and Catherine Zeschau, and Catherine Bora. The first impulse of these young women, after they were delivered from the superstitions of the monastery, was to write to their parents. "The salvation of our souls," said they, "will not permit us to remain any longer in a cloister."

Their parents, fearing the trouble likely to arise from such a resolution, harshly rejected their prayers. The poor nuns were dismayed. How can they leave the monastery? Their timidity was alarmed at so desperate a step. At last, the horror caused by the papal services prevailed, and they promised not to leave one another, but to repair in a body to some respectable place, with order and decency. Two worthy and pious citizens of Torgau, Leonard Koppe and Wolff Tomitzsch, offered their assistance, which they accepted as coming from God himself, and left the convent of Nimptsch without any opposition, and as if the hand of the Lord had opened the doors to them. Koppe and Tomitzsch received them in their wagon; and on the 7th of April 1523, the nine nuns, amazed at their own boldness, stopped in great emotion before the gate of the old Augustine convent in which Luther resided.

"This is not my doing," said Luther, as he received them; "but would to God that I could thus rescue all captive consciences and empty all the cloisters!—the breach is made!" Many persons offered to receive these nuns into their houses, and Catherine Bora found a welcome in the family of the burgomaster of Wittenberg.

If Luther at that time thought of preparing for any solemn event, it was to ascend the scaffold, and not to approach the altar. Many months after this, he still replied to those who spoke to him of marriage: "God may change my heart, if it be his pleasure; but now at least I have no thought of taking a wife; not that I do not feel any attractions in that estate; I am neither a stock nor a stone; but every day I expect the death and the punishment of a heretic."

Yet everything in the Church was advancing. The habits of a monastic life, the invention of man, were giving way in every quarter to those of domestic life, appointed

by God. On Sunday the 9th of October 1524, Luther, having risen as usual, laid aside the frock of the Augustine monk, and put on the dress of a secular priest; he then made his appearance in the church, where this change caused a lively satisfaction. Renovated Christendom hailed with transport everything that announced that the old things were passed away. Shortly after this, the last monk quitted the convent; but Luther remained; his footsteps alone re-echoed through the long galleries; he sat silent and solitary in the refectory that had so lately resounded with the babbling of the monks. An eloquent silence, attesting the triumphs of the Word of God! The convent had ceased to exist.

About the end of December 1524, Luther sent the keys of the monastery to the elector, informing him that he should see where it might please God to feed him. The elector gave the convent to the university, and invited Luther to continue his residence in it. The abode of the monks was destined erelong to be the sanctuary of a christian family. Luther, whose heart was formed to taste the sweets of domestic life, honoured and loved the marriage state; it is even probable that he had some liking for Catherine Bora. For a long while his scruples and the thought of the calumnies which such a step would occasion had prevented his thinking of her; and he had offered the poor Catherine, first to Baumgartner of Nuremberg; and then to Dr. Glatz of Orlamund. But when he saw Baumgartner refuse to take her, and when she had declined to accept Glatz, he asked himself seriously whether he ought not to think of marrying her himself.

His aged father, who had been so grieved when he embraced a monastic life, was urging him to enter the conjugal state. But one idea above all was daily present before Luther's conscience, and with greater energy: marriage is an institution of God,—celibacy an institution of man. He had a horror of everything that emanated from Rome. He would say to his friends, "I desire to retain nothing of my papistical life." Day and night he prayed and entreated the Lord to deliver him from his uncertainty. At last a single thought broke the last links that still held him captive. To all the motives of propriety and personal obedience which led him to apply to himself this declaration of God, It is not good that man should be alone, was added a motive of a higher and more powerful nature. He saw that if he was called to the marriage-state as a man, he was also called to it as a reformer; this decided him.

"If this monk should marry," said his friend Schurff the lawyer, "he will make all the world and the devil himself burst with laughter, and will destroy the work that he has begun." This remark made a very different impression on Luther from what might have been supposed. To brave the world, the devil, and his enemies, and, by an action which they thought calculated to ruin the cause of the Reformation, prevent

its success being in any measure ascribed to him—this was all he desired. Accordingly, boldly raising his head, he replied, "Well, then, I will do it; I will play the devil and the world this trick; I will content my father, and marry Catherine!" Luther, by his marriage, broke off still more completely from the institutions of the Papacy; he confirmed the doctrine he had preached, by his own example, and encouraged timid men to an entire renunciation of their errors. Rome appeared to be recovering here and there the ground she had lost; she flattered herself with the hope of victory; and now a loud explosion scattered terror and surprise through her ranks, and still more fully disclosed to her the courage of the enemy she fancied she had crushed. "I will bear witness to the Gospel," said Luther, "not by my words only, but also by my works. I am determined, in the face of my enemies who already exult and raise the shout of victory, to marry a nun, that they may see and know that they have not conquered me. I do not take a wife that I may live long with her; but seeing the nations and the princes letting loose their fury against me, foreseeing that my end is near, and that after my death they will again trample my doctrine under foot, I am resolved for the edification of the weak to bear a striking testimony to what I teach here below."

On the 11th of June 1525, Luther went to the house of his friend and colleague Amsdorff. He desired Pomeranus, whom he styled emphatically The Pastor, to bless his union. The celebrated painter Lucas Cranach and Doctor John Apella witnessed the marriage. Melancthon was not present.

No sooner was Luther married than all Europe was disturbed. He was overwhelmed with accusations and calumnies from every quarter. "It is incest," exclaimed Henry VIII. "A monk has married a vestal," said some.—"Antichrist will be the offspring of such a union," said others; "for a prophecy announces that he will be born of a monk and a nun." To this Erasmus replied with a sarcastic smile: "If the prophecy is true, what thousands of antichrists do not already exist in the world!" But while Luther was thus assailed, many wise and moderate men, whom the Roman Church still counted among her members, undertook his defense. "Luther," said Erasmus, "has taken a wife from the noble family of Bora, but she has no dowry." A more valuable testimony was now given in his favour. The master of Germany, Philip Melancthon, whom this bold step had at first alarmed, said with that grave voice to which even his enemies listened with respect: "It is false and slanderous to maintain that there is anything unbecoming in Luther's marriage. I think that in marrying he must have done violence to himself. A married life is one of humility, but it is also a holy state, if there be any such in the world, and the Scriptures everywhere represent it as honourable in the eyes of God."

Luther was troubled at first when he saw such floods of anger and contempt poured out upon him; Melancthon became more earnest in friendship and kindness towards him; and it was not long before the reformer could see a mark of God's approbation in this opposition of man. "If I did not offend the world," said he, "I should have cause to fear that what I have done is displeasing to God."

Eight years had elapsed between the time when Luther had attacked the indulgences and his marriage with Catherine Bora. It would be difficult to ascribe, as is still done, his zeal against the abuses of the Church to an "impatient desire" for wedlock. He was then forty-two years old, and Catherine Bora had already been two years in Wittenberg.

Luther was happy in this union. "The best gift of God," said he, "is a pious and amiable wife, who fears God, loves her family, with whom a man may live in peace, and in whom he may safely confide." Some months after his marriage he informed one of his friends of Catherine's pregnancy, and a year after they came together she gave birth to a son. The sweets of domestic life soon dispersed the storms that the exasperation of his enemies had at first gathered over him. His Ketha, as he styled her, manifested the tenderest affection towards him, consoled him in his dejection by repeating passages from the Bible, exonerated him from all household cares, sat near him during his leisure moments, worked his portrait in embroidery, reminded him of the friends to whom he had forgotten to write, and often amused him by the simplicity of her questions. A certain dignity appears to have marked her character, for Luther would sometimes call her, My Lord Ketha. One day he said playfully, that if he were to marry again, he would carve an obedient wife for himself out of a block of stone, for, added he, "it is impossible to find such a one in reality." His letters overflowed with tenderness for Catherine; he called her "his dear and gracious wife, his dear and amiable Ketha." Luther's character became more cheerful in Catherine's society, and this happy frame of mind never deserted him afterwards, even in the midst of his greatest trials.

The almost universal corruption of the clergy had brought the priesthood into general contempt, from which the isolated virtues of a few faithful servants of God had been unable to extricate it. Domestic peace and conjugal fidelity, those surest foundations of happiness here below, were continually disturbed in town and country by the gross passions of the priests and monks. No one was secure from those attempts at seduction. They took advantage of the access allowed them into every family, and sometimes even of the confidence of the confessional, to instil a deadly poison into the souls of their penitents, and to satisfy their guilty desires. The Reformation, by abolishing the celibacy of the ecclesiastics, restored the sanctity of

the conjugal state. The marriage of the clergy put an end to an immense number of secret crimes. The reformers became the models of their flocks in the most intimate and important relations of life; and the people were not slow in rejoicing to see the ministers of religion once more husbands and fathers.

CHAPTER 14

The Landgrave—The Elector—Prussia—Reformation—Secularisation—The Archbishop of Mentz—Conference at Friedwalt—Diet—Alliance of Torgau—Resistance of the Reformers—Alliance of Magdeburg—The Catholics redouble their Exertions—The Emperor's Marriage—Threatening Letters—The two Parties

At the first glance, Luther's marriage had, in truth, seemed to add to the difficulties of the Reformation. It was still suffering from the blow inflicted on it by the revolt of the peasants; the sword of the emperor and of the princes was yet unsheathed against it; and its friends, the Landgrave Philip and the new Elector John, appeared discouraged and silenced.

This state of things did not, however, last long. The youthful landgrave in a short time boldly raised his head. Ardent and courageous as Luther, the noble character of the reformer had won his esteem. He threw himself into the Reformation with all the enthusiasm of a young man, and at the same time studied it with all the gravity of a superior mind.

In Saxony, Frederick's place could not be supplied either in discretion or in influence; but his brother, the Elector John, instead of confining himself to the passive part of a protector, interposed more directly and with greater courage in religious affairs. As he was leaving Weimar on the 16th of August 1525, he said to the assembled clergy, "I desire that you will in future preach the pure Word of God, without any additions of man." Some aged ecclesiastics, who were puzzled how to obey his directions, replied artlessly, "But we are not forbidden to say mass for the dead, or to bless the water and salt?"— "Everything," said the elector, "ceremonies as well as sermons, must be conformed to God's Word."

Erelong the landgrave formed the extraordinary project of converting his father-in-law, Duke George. At one time he would establish the sufficiency of Scripture; at another, he would attack the mass, the papacy, and compulsory vows. Letter followed letter, and all the declarations of the Word of God were in turns opposed to the faith of the aged duke.

These efforts did not prove unavailing. The son of Duke George was won to the new doctrine. But Philip did not succeed with the father. "A hundred years hence we shall see who is right," said the latter. "A terrible saying," observed the Elector of Saxony; "what can that faith be which requires such long experience? Poor duke! he will wait long enough. I fear God has hardened his heart, as he did Pharaoh's of old."

In Philip the evangelical party found a bold and intelligent leader, capable of making head against the terrible attacks the enemy were planning against them. But have we not cause to regret that the chief of the Reformation should have been from this moment a man of the sword, and not simply a disciple of the Word of God? The human element expanded in the Reformation, and the spiritual element declined. This was injurious to the work; for every work should develop itself in accordance with the laws of its own nature, and the Reformation was of a nature essentially spiritual.

God was adding to the number of its supporters. Prussia, that powerful state on the frontiers of Germany, had already taken its station with joy under the banner of the Gospel. The chivalrous and religious spirit which had founded the Teutonic order gradually faded away with the ages in which it had arisen. The knights, consulting their own interests alone, had dissatisfied the people under their rule. Poland had taken advantage of this in 1466 to compel the order to recognise her supremacy. The people, the knights, the grandmaster, the Polish domination, were so many contrary powers ever in collision and rendering the prosperity of the country impossible.

Then came the Reformation, and it was perceived that this was the only means of salvation remaining for the unhappy people. Brismann, Speratus, Poliander who had been Dr. Eck's secretary at the Leipsic dispute, and many others, preached the Gospel in Prussia.

One day a mendicant from the country under the rule of the Teutonic knights, arrived at Wittenberg, and stopping before Luther's house, sang with a solemn voice the beautiful hymn by Poliander:—

"To us at last salvation's come!"

The reformer, who had never heard this christian strain, listened in astonishment and rapture; the foreign accent of the singer added to his delight: "Again, again," said he when the mendicant had finished. He then asked where he had learned the hymn; and his tears began to flow when the poor man informed him that a cry of deliverance was sounding from the shores of the Baltic even to Wittenberg. Luther clasped his hands and thanked God.

In truth the tidings of salvation had gone thither.

"Have pity on our wretched state," said the people of Prussia to the grand-master, "and give us preachers who teach the pure doctrine of the Gospel." Albert at first made no reply; but entered into correspondence with Sigismund, king of Poland, his uncle and lord-suzerain.

The latter recognised him as hereditary duke of Prussia, and the new prince make a public entry into his capital of Konigsberg with the ringing of bells and the acclamations of the people; all the houses were splendidly decorated, and the streets strewn with flowers. "There is but one order," said Albert, "and that is Christianity." The monastic orders were disappearing, and this Divine order was re-established.

The bishops resigned their secular rights to the new duke; the convents were changed into hospitals, the Gospel was preached in the meanest villages, and in the following year Albert married Dorothea, daughter of the King of Denmark, whose "faith in the one only Saviour" was not to be shaken.

The pope called upon the emperor to take severe measures against this "apostate" monk, and Charles laid Albert under an interdict. Another prince of the family of Brandenburg, the Cardinal-archbishop of Mentz, was then on the point of following his cousin's example. The peasant-wars more especially threatened the ecclesiastical states; the elector, Luther, and all Germany imagined they were on the eve of a great revolution. The archbishop, thinking the only way of preserving his principality would be to secularize it, secretly invited Luther to prepare the people for this daring step, which the latter did by a letter addressed to the archbishop and intended to be made public: "God," said he, "has laid his heavy hand upon the clergy; they must fall, nothing can save them." But the peasant-war having come to an end more speedily than had been anticipated, the cardinal kept his temporal possessions; his anxiety disappeared, and he renounced his plans of secularisation.

While John of Saxony, Philip of Hesse, and Albert of Prussia were taking so prominent a part in the Reformation, and instead of the prudent Frederick three princes were found full of resolution and courage, the holy work was advancing in the Church and among the nations. Luther entreated the elector to establish the evangelical ministry instead of the Roman priesthood, and to direct a general visitation of the churches. About the same time they were beginning at Wittenberg to exercise the episcopal functions and to ordain ministers. "Let not the pope, the bishops, the monks, and the priests exclaim: 'We are the Church; whosoever separates from us, separates from the Church!' There is no other Church than the assembly of those who have the Word of God, and who are purified by it." Such was the language of Melancthon.

All this could not be said and done without occasioning a strong reaction. Rome had thought the Reformation extinguished in the blood of the rebellious peasants: but its flames burst forth again in every quarter with greater power and brightness. She resolved on making another effort. The pope and the emperor wrote threatening letters,—the one from Rome, the other from Spain. The imperial government prepared to set matters on their old footing; and the idea was seriously entertained of effectually crushing the Reformation in the approaching diet.

On the 7th of November, the electoral prince of Saxony and the landgrave met in alarm at the castle of Friedewalt, and agreed that their deputies at the diet should act in concert. Thus in the forest of Sullingen were created the first elements of an evangelical alliance, in opposition to the leagues of Ratisbon and Dessau.

The diet opened at Augsburg on the 11th of December. The evangelical princes were not present in person. From the very first the deputies of Saxony and Hesse spoke out boldly: "The insurrection of the peasants," said they, "was owing to an impolitic severity. It is neither be fire nor sword that God's truth can be torn from the heart. If you determine to employ violent measures against the Reformation, more terrible calamities will befall you than those from which you have so recently and so narrowly escaped."

It was felt that whatever resolution was adopted, its results would be of the greatest importance. Every one desired to put off the decisive moment, in order to increase his own strength. They therefore determined to assemble again at Spires in the month of May following; and that in the meanwhile the recess of Nuremberg should continue in force. Then, said they, we will enter thoroughly into the subject "of the holy faith, of justice, and of peace."

The landgrave persevered in his plan. He had a conference with the elector at Gotha at the end of February 1526. These two princes agreed that if they were attacked on account of the Word of God, they should unite their forces to resist their adversaries. This alliance was ratified at Torgau, and was destined to produce important results.

The alliance of Torgau did not satisfy the landgrave. Convinced that Charles V was endeavouring to form a league "against Christ and his holy Word," he wrote letter after letter to the elector, representing to him the necessity of combining with other states. "As for me," wrote he, "I would rather die than renounce the Word of God and allow myself to be driven from my throne."

There was great uncertainty at the electoral court. In fact, a serious obstacle stood in the way of any union between the evangelical princes, and this obstacle was Luther and Melancthon. Luther desired that the evangelical doctrine should be defended by God alone. He thought that the less men interfered with it, the more striking would be God's interposition. It seemed to him that whatever measures they desired to take, they must be ascribed to an unworthy timidity or a blamable mistrust. Melancthon feared that the alliance of the evangelical princes would precipitate that very struggle which they were desirous of avoiding.

The landgrave was not to be checked by these considerations, and he endeavoured to bring the neighbouring states into the alliance; but his exertions were not crowned with success. Frankfort refused to enter it. The Elector of Treves abandoned his opposition and accepted a pension from the emperor. Even the elector-palatine, whose evangelical disposition was well known, rejected Philip's proposals.

Thus the landgrave failed on the side of the Rhine; but the elector, notwithstanding the opinions of the theologians of the Reformation, entered into negotiations with the princes who had at all times rallied round the powerful house of Saxony. On the 12th of June, the elector and his son, the Dukes Philip, Ernest, Otho, and Francis of Brunswick and Luneburg, Duke Henry of Mecklenburg, Prince Wolff of Anhalt, Counts Albert and Gebhard of Mansfeldt, assembled at Magdeburg; and there, under the presidence of the elector, they formed an alliance similar to that of Torgau.

"Almighty God," said these princes, "having in his unspeakable mercy revived among men his holy and eternal Word, the food of our souls, and our greatest treasure here below; and great exertions having been made on the part of the clergy and their adherents to suppress and extirpate it, we, being firmly assured that He who hath sent it to glorify His name upon earth, will also know how to maintain it, bind ourselves to preserve that blessed Word for our people, and to that end to employ our goods, our lives, our states, our subjects, and all that we possess; putting our trust, not in our armies, but solely in the omnipotence of the Lord, whose instruments we desire to be." Such was the language of the princes.

Two days after, the city of Magdeburg was received into the alliance, and the new duke of Prussia, Albert of Brandenburg, acceded to it by a separate treaty.

The evangelical alliance was thus formed; but the perils that it was intended to avert became every day more threatening. The clergy and the princes friendly to Rome had seen the Reformation, which they had thought stifled, suddenly growing

up before them in a formidable shape. Already the partisans of the Reformation were almost as powerful as those of the pope. If they had a majority in the diet, the consequences to the ecclesiastical states might easily be imagined. Now or never! It is no longer a question of refuting a heresy; they have to contend against a powerful party. Other victories than those of Dr. Eck are required to save Christendom.

Effectual precautions had already been taken. The metropolitan Chapter of the collegiate church at Mentz had called a meeting of all its suffragans, and decided on sending a deputation to the emperor and the pope, calling on them to preserve the Church.

At the same time, Duke George of Saxony, Duke Henry of Brunswick, and the Cardinal-elector Albert, had met at Halle, and resolved to address a memorial to Charles V. "The detestable doctrine of Luther," said they, "is making rapid progress. Every day attempts are made to gain over even us; and as they cannot succeed by gentle measures, they are striving to compel us, by exciting our subjects to revolt. We implore the assistance of the emperor." Immediately after this conference, Brunswick himself set out for Spain in order to influence Charles's determination.

He could not have arrived at a more favourable moment; the emperor had just concluded the famous treaty of Madrid with France; he seemed to have nothing more to fear in that quarter, and his eyes were now turned solely towards Germany. Francis I had offered to defray a moiety of the expenses of a war, either against the heretics or against the Turks.

The emperor was at Seville, where he was about to marry a princess of Portugal, and the banks of the Guadalquivir re-echoed with the noise of his festivities. A glittering train of nobles and a vast concourse of people crowded that ancient capital of the Moors. Under the arched roof of its magnificent cathedral were displayed all the pompous ceremonies of the Church; a legate from the pope officiated, and never, even under the dominion of the Arabs, had Andalusia witnessed a spectacle of greater splendour and solemnity. At this very moment Henry of Brunswick arrived from Germany, and besought Charles to rescue the empire and the Church from the attacks of the monk of Wittenberg. His request was immediately taken into consideration, and the emperor decided on adopting vigorous measures.

On the 23rd of March 1526, he wrote to several of the princes and cities that had remained faithful to Rome. At the same time he gave Henry of Brunswick a special commission to inform them verbally that he had been seriously grieved to learn that the continual progress of the Lutheran heresy threatened to fill Germany with sacrilege, devastation, and bloodshed; that on the contrary he beheld with extreme

pleasure the fidelity of the majority of the states; that, laying aside all other occupations, he was about to leave Spain and repair to Rome, to come to an understanding with the pope, and from thence proceed to Germany to fight against the abominable pest of Wittenberg; that, on their parts, it was their duty to adhere to their faith; and if the Lutherans sought to lead them into error by stratagem or force, they should form a close alliance and boldly resist them; and that he would soon arrive and support them with all his power.

When Brunswick returned to Germany, the Romish party were transported with joy and proudly lifted up their heads. The Dukes of Brunswick and Pomerania, Albert of Mecklenburg, John of Juliers, George of Saxony, the Dukes of Bavaria, and all the princes of the Church, thought themselves secure of victory, as they read the menacing letters of the conqueror of Francis I. They resolved to attend the approaching diet, to humble the heretical princes, and if they did not submit, to compel them by the sword. Duke George is reported to have said, "I may be Elector of Saxony whenever I please;" he subsequently, however, endeavoured to give another meaning to these words. "Luther's cause will not last long: let him look to it!" said the duke's chancellor one day at Torgau, with an air of triumph.

Luther, indeed, was looking to it, but not as the chancellor understood the expression; he was attentively watching the motions of the enemies of God's Word, and, like Melancthon, imagined he saw thousands of swords unsheathed against the Gospel. But he sought for other and higher strength than that of man. "Satan," wrote he to Frederick Myconius, "is putting forth his fury; ungodly pontiffs are conspiring; and we are threatened with war. Exhort the people to contend valiantly before the throne of the Lord by faith and prayer, so that our enemies, vanquished by the Spirit of God, may be constrained to peace. Our chief want, our chief labour is prayer; let the people know that they are now exposed to the edge of the sword and to the rage of Satan, and let them pray."

Thus were all things tending towards a decisive struggle. The Reformation had on its side the prayers of Christians, the sympathy of the people, and an increasing influence over men's minds that no power could check. The papacy had in its favour the ancient order of things, the strength of old custom, the zeal and hatred of formidable princes, and the power of that mighty emperor who reigned over two worlds, and who had just before given so rude a check to the ambition of Francis the First.

Such was the state of affairs when the Diet of Spires was opened.

Now let us return to Switzerland.

BOOK XI—Divisions: Switzerland—Germany 1523-1527

CHAPTER 1

Unity in Diversity—Primitive Fidelity and Liberty—Formation of Romish Unity—Leo Juda and the Monk—Zwingle's Theses—The Disputation of January

We are about to contemplate the diversities, or, as they have been called, the variations of the Reformation. These diversities are one of its most essential characteristics.

Unity in diversity and diversity in unity, is a law of nature as well as of the Church.

Truth is like the light of the sun: it descends from heaven one and ever the same; and yet it assumes different colours upon earth, according to the objects on which it falls. In like manner, formularies somewhat different may sometimes express the same christian idea considered under different aspects.

How dull would creation be if this boundless variety of forms and colours, which gives it beauty, were replaced by an absolute uniformity! But how melancholy also would be its appearance, if all created beings did not form a magnificent unity!

Divine unity has its rights, so also has human diversity. In religion we must suppress neither God nor man. If you have not unity, your religion is not of God; if you have not diversity, the religion is not of man; but it ought to be of both. Would you erase from creation one of the laws that God himself has imposed on it,— that of infinite diversity? And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? But if there is a diversity in religion arising from the difference of individuality, and which consequently must subsist even in heaven, there is one that proceeds from man's rebellion, and this is indeed a great calamity.

There are two tendencies which equally lead us into error. The one exaggerates diversity, the other exaggerates unity. The essential doctrines of salvation are the limit between these two courses. To require more than these doctrines, is to infringe this diversity; to require less, is to infringe unity.

The latter excess is that of rash and rebellious minds, who look beyond Jesus Christ to form systems and doctrines of men.

The former exists in various exclusive sects, and particularly in that of Rome.

The Church should reject error, and unless this be done, Christianity cannot be maintained. But if this idea were carried to extremes, it would follow that the Church should take arms against the least deviation, and put herself in motion for mere verbal disputes. Faith would thus be fettered, and the feelings of Christians reduced to bondage. Such was not the condition of the Church in the times of real catholicity,—the catholicity of the primitive ages. She rejected the sects that attacked the fundamental truths of the Gospel; but these truths once received, it left full liberty to faith. Rome soon departed from this wise course; and in proportion as the dominion and teaching of men arose in the Church, there sprung up by their side a unity of man.

When a merely human system had been once invented, coercion increased from age to age. The christian liberty, respected by the Catholicism of the earlier ages, was at first limited, then enslaved, and finally stifled. Conviction, which according to the laws of human nature and of the Word of God should be freely formed in the heart and understanding of man, was imposed from without, completely formed and symmetrically arranged by the masters of mankind. Reflection, will, feeling, all the faculties of the human being which, subjected to the Word and Spirit of God, should work and bear fruit freely, were deprived of their liberty, and constrained to expand in shapes that had been determined upon beforehand. The mind of man became as a mirror on which extraneous objects are reflected, but which possesses nothing by itself. Doubtless there still existed many souls that had been taught direct of God. But the great majority of Christians from that time received the convictions of others only; a faith peculiar to the individual was rare; it was the Reformation alone that restored this treasure to the Church.

And yet for Sometime there was a space within which the human mind was permitted to move; there were certain opinions that might be received or rejected at will. But as a hostile army day by day presses closer to a besieged city, compels the garrison to move only within the narrow boundary of its ramparts, and at last forces it to [394]surrender; so the hierarchy, from age to age, and almost from year to year, contracted the space that it had temporarily granted to the human mind, until at last this space, from continual encroachments, had ceased to exist. All that man ought to love, believe, or do, was regulated and decreed in the offices of the Roman chancery.

The faithful were relieved of the fatigue of examining, of reflecting, of contending; all that they had to do was to repeat the formularies they had been taught.

From that time, if there appeared in the bosom of Roman Catholicism anyone who had inherited the Catholicism of the apostolic ages, such a man feeling his inability to expand in the bonds in which he was confined, was compelled to snap them asunder, and display again to the astonished world the unfettered bearing of a Christian, who acknowledges no law save that of God.

The Reformation, by restoring liberty to the Church, was destined also to restore its original diversity, and to people it with families united by the great features of resemblance they derive from their common parent; but different in their secondary features, and reminding us of the varieties inherent in human nature. Perhaps it would have been desirable for this diversity to exist in the universal Church without leading to sectarian divisions. Nevertheless, we must not forget that these sects are but the expression of this diversity.

Switzerland and Germany, which had till this time developed themselves independently of each other, began to come in contact in the years whose history we are about to retrace, and realised the diversity of which we have been speaking, and which was to be one of the characteristics of Protestantism. We shall there behold men perfectly agreed on all the great doctrines of faith, and yet differing on certain secondary points. Passion, indeed, entered into these discussions; but while deploring such a melancholy intermixture, Protestantism, far from seeking to conceal her diversity, publishes and proclaims it. Its path to unity is long and difficult, but this unity is the real unity.

Zwingle was advancing in the christian life. While the Gospel had freed Luther from that profound melancholy to which he had formerly given way in the convent of Erfurth, and had developed in him a serenity which often amounted to gaiety, and of which the reformer afterwards gave so many proofs, even in the face of great dangers, Christianity had produced the very opposite effect on the joyous child of the Tockenburg mountains. Tearing Zwingle from his thoughtless and worldly life, it had imprinted a seriousness on his character that was not natural to him. This seriousness was very necessary to him. We have seen how towards the close of the year 1522 numerous enemies appeared rising up against the Reformation. Zwingle was overwhelmed with reproaches from every quarter, and disputes would often take place even in the churches.

Leo Juda, who (says an historian) was a man of small stature, but full of love for the poor, and zeal against false teachers, had arrived at Zurich about the end of the year 1522 to occupy the station of pastor of St. Peter's church. He had been replaced at Einsidlen by Oswald Myconius. This was a valuable acquisition for Zwingle and for the Reformation.

One day, not long after his arrival, as he was in the church of which he had been appointed pastor, he heard an Augustine monk asserting forcibly that man is able of himself to satisfy the righteousness of God. "Reverend father prior," said Leo, "listen to me for an instant; and you, my dear citizens, keep still; I will speak as becomes a Christian." He then proved to the people the falseness of the doctrine to which he had been listening. Upon this a great disturbance arose in the church; and immediately several persons angrily fell upon "the little priest" from Einsidlen. Zwingle appeared before the great council, requiring permission to give an account of his doctrine in the presence of the deputies of the bishop; and the council, desirous of putting an end to these disturbances, convened a conference for the 29th of January 1523. The news spread rapidly through the whole of Switzerland. His adversaries exclaimed in their vexation: "A diet of vagabonds is to be held at Zurich; all the beggars from the highways will be there."

Zwingle, desiring to prepare for the struggle, published sixtyseven theses. The mountaineer of the Tockenburg boldly assailed the pope in the eyes of all Switzerland.

"All those (said he) who maintain that the Gospel is nothing without the confirmation of the Church, blaspheme God. "Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation for all those who have been, who are, or who shall be.

"All Christians are Christ's brethren, and brethren of one another, and they have no father upon earth: thus orders, sects, and parties fall to the ground.

"We should not constrain those who will not acknowledge their error, unless they disturb the public peace by their seditious behaviour."

Such were some of Zwingle's propositions.

Early in the morning of Thursday the 29th of January, more than six hundred persons had collected in the hall of the Great Council at Zurich. Citizens and strangers, scholars, men of rank and the clergy had responded to the call of the council. "What will be the end of all this?" asked they of one another. No one ventured

to reply; but the attention, emotion, and agitation prevailing in this assembly, clearly manifested that they were expecting some extraordinary result.

The burgomaster Roust, who had fought at Marignan, presided at the conference. The chevalier James d'Anwyl, grand-master of the episcopal court at Constance, the vicar-general Faber, and many other doctors, were present as the bishop's representatives. Sebastian Hofmeister had been sent by Schaffhausen, and he was the only deputy from the cantons: such was still the weakness of the Reformation in Switzerland. On a table in the middle of the hall lay a Bible; in front of it sat Zwingle: "I am agitated and tormented on every side," he had said, "and yet I stand firm, relying not on my own strength, but on Christ the rock, with whose help I can do all things."

Zwingle stood up and said: "I have preached that salvation is found in Jesus Christ alone, and for this reason I am stigmatised throughout Switzerland as a heretic, a seducer of the people, a rebel Now, then, in the name of God, here I stand!"

Upon this all eyes were turned towards Faber, who rose and made answer: "I was not sent here to dispute, but merely to listen!" The assembly in surprise began to laugh. "The Diet of Nuremberg," continued Faber, "has promised a council within a year; we must wait until it meets."

"What!" said Zwingle, "is not this vast and learned meeting as good as any council?" Then turning to the presidents, he added: "Gracious lords, defend the Word of God."

A deep silence followed this appeal; it was interrupted by the burgomaster, who said: "If there is anyone here who has anything to say, let him do so." There was another pause. "I call upon all those who have accused me, and I know that there are several here," said Zwingle, "to come forward and reprove me for the love of truth." No one said a word. Zwingle repeated his request a second and third time, but to no purpose. Faber, thus closely pressed, dropped for an instant the reserve he had imposed on himself, to declare that he had convicted the pastor of Filispach of his error, and who was not confined in prison; but immediately after resumed his character as a spectator. It was in vain that he was urged to set forth the reasons by which he had convinced this pastor: he obstinately refused. This silence on the part of the Romish doctors tired the patience of the meeting. A voice was heard exclaiming from the farther part of the hall: "Where are now these valiant fellows, who talk so loudly in the streets? Come along, step forward, there's your man!" No one moved. Upon this the burgomaster said with a smile: "It would appear that this famous sword

with which you smote the pastor of Filispach will not come out of its sheath today;" and he then broke up the meeting.

When the assembly met again in the afternoon, the council declared that Master Ulrich Zwingle, not being reproved by any one, might continue to preach the holy Gospel, and that the rest of the clergy in the canton should teach nothing that they could not substantiate by Scripture.

"Praised be God, who will cause his holy Word to prevail in heaven and earth!" exclaimed Zwingle. Upon this Faber could not restrain his indignation. "The theses of Master Ulrich," said he, "are contrary to the honour of the Church and the doctrine of Christ; and I will prove it." "Do so," replied Zwingle. But Faber declined his challenge, except it should be at Paris, Cologne, or Friburg. "I will have no other judge than the Gospel," said Zwingle. "Sooner than you can shake one of its words, the earth will open before you." "The Gospel!" sneered Faber, "always the Gospel! Men might live in holiness, peace, and charity, even if there were no Gospel."

At these words the spectators rose indignantly from their seats. Thus terminated the disputation.

CHAPTER 2

Papal Temptation—Progress of the Reformation—The Idol at Staderhofen—Sacrilege—The Ornaments of the Saints

The Reformation had gained the day; it was now to accelerate its conquests. After his battle of Zurich, in which the most skilful champions of the papacy were dumb, who would bold enough to oppose the new doctrine? But weapons of a different kind were tried. Zwingle's firmness and republican bearing overawed his adversaries; accordingly they had recourse to peculiar measures to subdue him. While Rome was pursuing Luther with her anathemas, she endeavoured to win over the reformer of Zurich by gentleness. The dispute was scarcely ended when Zwingle received a visit from the captain of the pope's guard—the son of the burgomaster Roust. He was accompanied by the legate Einsius, the bearer of a papal brief, in [396] which Adrian VI called Zwingle his beloved son, and assured him of "his special favour." At the same time the pope urged Zink to gain over Zwingle. "And what has the pope commissioned you to offer him?" asked Oswald Myconius. "Everything," replied Zink, "except the papal chair."

There was no mitre, or crozier, or cardinal's hat, that the pope would not have given to bribe the reformer of Zurich. But Rome was strangely mistaken in this respect; all her proposals were unavailing. In Zwingle, the Romish Church had a still more pitiless enemy than Luther. He cared far less than the Saxon reformer for the ideas and ceremonies of former ages; it was enough for him that any custom, however innocent in itself, was connected with some abuse, he fell violently upon it. The Word of God (thought he) should stand alone. But if Rome understand so imperfectly what was then taking place in Christendom, she found councillors who endeavoured to put her in the way.

Faber, exasperated at seeing the pope thus humble himself before his adversary, hastened to enlighten him. He was a courtier with a constant smile upon his lips and honied words in his mouth; to judge from his own language, he was everybody's friend, even of those whom he accused of heresy. But his hatred was mortal. Accordingly, the reformer, playing on his name (Faber), used to say, "the Vicar of Constance is a lie-smith. Let him openly take up arms, and see how Christ defends us."

These words were no mere idle boasting; for while the pope was complimenting Zwingle on his eminent virtues, and the special confidence he placed in him, the enemies of the reformer were increasing in number throughout Switzerland. The veteran soldiers, the great families, the herdsmen of the mountains, combined their

hatred against this doctrine which thwarted their tastes. At Lucerne, the magnificent representation of Zwingle's passion was announced; in effect, the people dragged the reformer's effigy to the scaffold, shouting out that they were going to put the heretic to death; and laying hands on some Zurichers who happened to be at Lucerne, compelled them to be spectators of this mock execution. "They shall not trouble my repose," said Zwingle; "Christ will never be wanting to his followers." Even the diet re-echoed with threats against him. "My dear confederates," said the councillor of Mullinen to the cantons, "make a timely resistance to the Lutheran cause At Zurich a man is no longer master in his own house!"

This agitation among the enemy announced what was passing in Zurich more loudly than any proclamations could have done. The victory was indeed bearing fruit; the conquerors were gradually taking possession of the country, and every day the Gospel made fresh progress. Twenty-four canons and a great number of chaplains voluntarily petitioned the council to reform their statutes. It was decided to replace these sluggish priest by pious and learned men, with commission to give the Zurich youth a christian and liberal education, and to establish in the place of their vespers and Latin masses, a daily explanation of a Chapter in the Bible, according to the Hebrew and Greek texts, first for the learned, and afterwards for the people.

There are unfortunately in every army a number of those desperate heroes who leave their ranks and make unseasonable attacks on points that ought still to be respected. A young priest, Louis Hetzer, had published a treatise in German entitled, The judgment of God against Images, which produced a great sensation, and the images wholly engrossed the thoughts of a part of the people. It is only to the detriment of those essentials that ought to occupy his mind, that man can fix his attention on secondary matters. At a place called Stadelhofen, outside the city gates, stood a crucifix elabourately carved and richly ornamented. The most zealous partisans of the Reformation, shocked at the superstitions to which this image gave rise, could not pass by without giving vent to their indignation. A citizen named Claude Hottinger, "a worthy man," says Bullinger, "and well read in the Holy Scriptures," having fallen in with the miller of Stadelhofen, to whom the crucifix belonged, asked him when he intended to throw down his idols. "No one compels you to worship them," replied the miller.—"But do you not know," retorted Hottinger, "that the Word of God forbids us to have any graven images?"—"Well then," said the miller, "if you are authorized to remove them, I abandon them to you." Hottinger thought himself empowered to act, and shortly after, about the end of September, he was seen to pass the gates with a body of citizens. On arriving at the crucifix, they deliberately dug round it, until the image, yielding to their efforts, fell to the earth with a loud crash.

This daring action spread dismay on every side: one might have thought that religion itself had fallen with the crucifix of Stadelhofen. "They are guilty of sacrilege! They deserve to be put to death!" exclaimed the friends of Rome. The council caused the imagebreakers to be apprehended.

"No!" cried Zwingle and his colleagues from their pulpits: "Hottinger and his friends are not guilty in the sight of God and worthy [397] of death. But they may be punished for having acted with violence and without the sanction of the magistrates."

Meantime acts of a similar nature were continually taking place. A curate of Saint Peter's, one day remarking in front of the church a number of poor people ill fed and with tattered garments, said to one of his colleagues, as he turned his eyes on the costly ornaments of the saints: "I should like to strip these idols of wood to procure clothing for these poor members of Jesus Christ." A few days later, at three o'clock in the morning, the saints and all their ornaments disappeared. The council flung the curate into prison, notwithstanding he protested his innocence of this proceeding. "What!" exclaimed the people, "is it these logs of wood that Jesus ordered us to clothe? Is it on account of these images that he will say to the righteous: I was naked, and ye clothed me?"

Thus, the greater the resistance, the higher soared the Reformation; and the more it was compressed, the more energetically did it spring forward, and threaten to overthrow all that withstood it.

CHAPTER 3

The Disputation of October—Zwingle on the Church—The Church—Commencement of Presbyterianism—Discussion on the Mass—Enthusiasts—The Language of Discretion—Victory—A Characteristic of the Swiss Reformation—Moderation—Oswald Myconius at Zurich—Revival of Literature—Thomas Plater of the Valais

Even these excesses were destined to be salutary; a new combat was needed to secure fresh triumphs; for in the things of the Spirit, as in the affairs of the world, there is no conquest without a struggle; and as the soldiers of Rome stood motionless, the conflict was to be brought on by the undisciplined sons of the Reformation. In fact, the magistrates were embarrassed and agitated; they felt the necessity of having their consciences enlightened, and with this view they resolved to appoint another public disputation in the German language, in which the question of idols should be examined according to Scripture.

The Bishops of Coire, Constance, and Basle, the university of the latter city, and the twelve cantons, were accordingly requested to send deputies to Zurich. But the bishops declined the invitation, and calling to mind the wretched figure their deputies had made at the former disputation, they had little inclination to repeat such humiliating scenes. Let the evangelicals dispute if they please, but let them dispute alone. On the first occasion, the Romish party had kept silence; on the second they were resolved not to appear. Rome may possibly have imagined that the great combat would cease for want of combatants. The bishops were not alone in refusing to attend. The men of Unterwalden replied that they had no scholars among them, but only worthy and pious priests, who explained the Gospel as their fathers had done; that they would send no deputy to Zwingle "and his fellows;" but that, if he fell into their hands, they would treat him in such a manner as to deprive him of all wish to relapse into the same faults. Schaffhausen and St. Gall alone sent representatives.

On the 26th of October, after the sermon, an assembly of more than nine hundred persons, composed of members of the Great Council and of three hundred and fifty priests, filled the large hall of the town-house. Zwingle and Leo Juda were seated at a table, on which lay the Old and New Testament in the original languages. Zwingle spoke first, and overthrowing with a vigorous arm the authority of the hierarchy and of its councils, established the rights of every Christian Church, and claimed the liberty of the primitive ages—of those times when the Church knew neither general nor provincial councils. "The universal Church," said he, "is spread over the whole world, wherever there is faith in Christ, in India as well as at Zurich And as for

particular churches, we have them at Berne, at Schaffhausen, and even here. But the popes, with their cardinals and their councils, form neither the universal Church nor a particular Church. The assembly before which I now speak," continued he with energy, "is the Church of Zurich; it desires to hear the Word of God, and it has the right of ordering all that may appear to it conformable with the Holy Scriptures."

Thus did Zwingle rely on the Church, but on the true Church; not on the clergy alone, but on the assembly of Christians,—on the people. All that the Scriptures say of the Church in general, he applied to particular churches. He did not think that any church could err which listened with docility to the Word of God. In his eyes, the Church was represented politically and ecclesiastically by the Great Council. At first he explained every question from the pulpit; and when his hearers' minds were convinced of the truth, he carried the matter before the Great Council, who, in harmony with the ministers of the Church, formed such decisions as the Church called for.

In the absence of the bishop's deputies, Conrad Hoffmann, the same aged canon who had procured Zwingle's election to Zurich, undertook the defense of the pope. He maintained that the Church, the flock, the "third estate," had no right to discuss such matters. "I was thirteen years at Heidelberg," said he, "living in the house of a very great scholar, whose name was Doctor Joss, a worthy and pious man, with whom I long ate and drank and led a merry life; but I always heard him say that it was not proper to discuss such matters; so you see"All were ready to burst into laughter; but the burgomaster checked them. "Let us therefore wait for a council," continued Hoffmann. "For the present, I shall not dispute, but obey the bishop's orders, even should he be a knave!"

"Wait for a council!" replied Zwingle. "And who will attend a council? The pope with some sluggish and ignorant bishops who will do nothing but what suits their fancy. No! the Church is not there! Hong and Kussnacht (these were two Zurich villages) are certainly more of a church than all the bishops and popes put together!"

Thus did Zwingle vindicate the rights of the christian people, whom Rome had deprived of their privileges. The assembly before which he was speaking was not, in his judgment, the Church of Zurich, but its first representative. This is the beginning of the Presbyterian system in the age of the Reformation. Zwingle was withdrawing Zurich from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Constance, separating it from the Latin hierarchy, and founding on this idea of the flock, of the christian assembly, a new ecclesiastical constitution, to which other countries were afterwards to adhere.

The disputation continued. Many priests having risen to defend the images, but without having recourse to Holy Writ, Zwingle and the other reformers confuted them by the Bible. "If no one stands forward to defend the use of images by arguments derived from Scripture," said one of the presidents, "we shall call upon some of their advocates by name." As no one arose, the priest of Wadischwyl was called. "He is asleep," answered one of the spectators. The priest of Horgen was next called. "He has sent me in his place," replied the curate, "but I will not answer for him." Evidently the power of God's Word was making itself felt in this assembly. The partisans of the Reformation were full of energy, liberty, and joy; their adversaries appeared speechless, uneasy, and dejected. They summoned, one after another, the parish-priests of Laufen, Glattfelden, Wetzikon, the rector and priest of Pfaffikon, the dean of Elgg, the priest of Baretschwyl, with the Dominicans and Gray-friars, notorious for their preaching in defense of images, the virgin, the saints, and the mass; but all made answer that they could say nothing in their favour, and that henceforward they would apply themselves to the study of the truth. "Hitherto," said one of them, "I have put my trust in the old doctors; now, I will believe in the new."—

"You should believe not in us, but in God's Word," exclaimed Zwingle. "It is Scripture alone that can never err!" The sitting had been long, and night was approaching. The president, Hofmeister of Schaffhausen, stood up and said: "Blessed by the Almighty and Everlasting God for that in all things he has vouchsafed us the victory;" and he then exhorted the councillors of Zurich to pull down all the images.

On Tuesday the assembly met again in order to discuss the doctrine of the mass. Vadian was in the chair. "My brethren in Christ," said Zwingle, "far from us be the thought that there is any deception or falsehood in the body and blood of Christ. Our only aim is to show that the mass is not a sacrifice that one man can offer to God for another, unless anyone should maintain also that a man can eat and drink for his friend."

Vadian having twice demanded if any there present desired to uphold by Scripture the doctrine impugned, and no one having replied, the canons of Zurich, the chaplains, and many other ecclesiastics declared that they agreed with Zwingle.

But scarcely had the reformers thus vanquished the partisans of the old doctrines, than they had to contend against those impatient spirits who call for sudden and violent innovations, and not for wise and gradual reforms. The wretched Conrad Grebel rose and said: "It is not enough to have disputed about the mass, we must put an end to its abuses."—"The council will draw up an edict on the subject," replied Zwingle. Upon this Simon Stumpf exclaimed: "The Spirit of God has already

decided: why refer to the decision of the council?" The commander Schmidt of Kussnacht arose gravely, and in language full of wisdom said, "Let us teach Christians to receive Christ in their hearts. Until this hour, ye have all gone after idols. The dwellers in the plain have run to the mountains, and those of the mountains have gone to the plain; the French to Germany, and the Germans to France. Now ye know whither ye ought to go. God has combined all things in Christ. Ye noble citizens of Zurich! go to the true source; and may Christ at length re-enter your territory, and there resume his ancient empire."

This discourse made a deep impression, and no one stood up to reply to it. Zwingle rose with emotion and said, "Gracious lords, God is with us He will defend his cause. Now, then, forward in the name of God." Here Zwingle's agitation became so great that he could not proceed. He wept, and many joined their tears with his.

Thus ended the disputation. The presidents rose; the burgomaster thanked them; and the aged warrior, turning to the council, said gravely, with that voice which had so often been heard on the field of battle, "Now, then, let us grasp the sword of God's Word, and may the Lord prosper his work."

This dispute, which took place in the month of October 1523, was decisive. The majority of the priests, who had been present at it, returned full of zeal to the different parts of the canton, and the effect of these two days was felt throughout Switzerland. The Church of Zurich, that had always preserved a certain independence with respect to the see of Constance, was then entirely emancipated. Instead of resting on the pope through the bishop, it rested henceforward through the people on the Word of God. Zurich recovered the privileges that Rome had taken from her. Town and country vied with each other in interest for the work of the Reformation, and the Great Council did but follow the movements of the people. On all important occasions the city and the villages made known their opinions. Luther had restored the Bible to the christian world; Zwingle went farther, he restored their rights. This is a characteristic feature of the Swiss Reformation. The maintenance of sound doctrine was thus confided, under God, to the people; and recent events have shown that a christian people can guard this precious deposit better than priests and pontiffs.

Zwingle did not allow himself to be elated by victory; on the contrary, the Reformation, according to his wish, was carried on with great moderation. "God knows my heart," said he, when the council asked his advice; "He knows that I am inclined to build up, and not to throw down. I am aware that there are timid souls who ought to be conciliated; let the mass, therefore, for Sometime longer be read on Sunday in all the churches, and let us avoid insulting the priests who celebrate it."

The council drew up an edict to this purport. Hottinger and Hochrutiner, one of his friends, were banished from the canton for two years, and forbidden to return without permission.

The Reformation at Zurich followed a prudent and christian course. Daily raising this city more and more, it surrounded her with glory in the eyes of all the friends of the Word of God. Accordingly those in Switzerland who had saluted the new light that was dawning upon the Church felt themselves powerfully attracted towards Zurich. Oswald Myconius, expelled from Lucerne, had been residing for six months at Einsidlen, when, as he was returning one day from a journey he had made to Glaris, oppressed by fatigue and by the heat of the sun, he saw his little boy Felix running to meet him, and to tell him that he had been invited to Zurich to superintend one of the schools. Oswald could not believe such joyful tidings: he hesitated between fear and hope. "I am thine," wrote he at last to Zwingle. Geroldsek saw him depart with regret; gloomy thoughts filled his mind. "Alas!" said he to Oswald, "all those who confess Christ are going to Zurich; I fear that one day we shall all perish there together." A melancholy presentiment, which by the death of Geroldsek himself and of so many other friends of the Gospel, was but too soon fulfilled on the plains of Cappel.

At Zurich, Myconius found at last a safe retreat. His predecessor, who from his stature had been nicknamed at Paris "the great devil," had neglected his duties; Oswald devoted all his heart and strength to their fulfillment. He explained the Greek and Latin classics, taught rhetoric and logic, and the youth of the city listened to him with delight. Myconius was destined to become for the rising generation what Zwingle was to those of riper years.

At first Myconius was alarmed at the advanced age of the scholars under his care; but he had gradually resumed his courage, and was not long in distinguishing among his pupils a young man, twentyfour years of age, from whose eyes beamed forth a love of study. Thomas Plater, for such was his name, was a native of the Valais. In that beautiful valley, where the torrent of the Viege rolls its noisy waters, after issuing from the sea of ice and snow which encircles Mount Rosa, between St. Nicholas and Staloen, on the lofty hill that rises on the right bank of the river, may still be seen the village of Grachen. This was Plater's birthplace. From the neighbourhood of these colossal Alps was to proceed one of the most original of all the characters that appeared in the great drama of the sixteenth century.

At the age of nine years, he had been placed under the care of a priest who was his relation, by whom the little peasant was often so cruelly beaten that he cried

(as he tells us himself) like a kid under the knife. He was taken by one of his cousins to attend the German schools. But he had already attained the age of twenty years, and yet, through running from school to school, he scarcely knew how to read. When he arrived at Zurich, he came to the determination of gaining knowledge; and having taken his place in Oswald's school, he said to himself, "There shalt thou learn or die." The light of the Gospel shown into his heart. One very cold morning, when he had no fuel for the school-room stove, which it was his duty to keep up, he thought to himself: "Why should you want wood, while there are many idols in the church!" There was no one as yet in the church, although Zwingle was to preach, and the bells were already summoning the congregation. Plater entered very softly, laid hold of an image of St. John that stood upon an altar, and thrust it into the stove, saying: "Down with you, for in you must go." Most assuredly neither Myconius nor Zwingle would have sanctioned such a proceeding.

It was in truth by better arms than these than incredulity and superstition were to be combated. Zwingle and his colleagues had given the hand of fellowship to Myconius; and the latter daily expounded the New Testament in the church of Our Lady before an eager and attentive crowd. Another public disputation, held on the 13th and 14th of January 1524, had again proved fatal to Rome; and in vain did the canon Koch exclaim: "Popes, cardinals, bishops, councils—these are my church!"

Everything was making progress in Zurich; men's minds were becoming more enlightened, their hearts more decided, and the Reformation was increasing in strength. Zurich was a fortress gained by the new doctrine, and from her walls it was about to spread over the whole confederation.

CHAPTER 4

Diet of Lucerne—Hottinger arrested—His Death—Deputation from the Diet to Zurich—Abolition of religious Processions—Abolition of Images—The Two Reformations—Appeal to the People

The adversaries were aware of what might be the consequences of these changes in Zurich. They felt that they must now decide upon striking a vigorous blow. They had been silent spectators long enough. The iron-clad warriors of Switzerland determined to rise at last; and whenever they arose, the field of battle had been dyed with blood.

The diet had met at Lucerne; the clergy were endeavouring to excite the chief council of the nation in their favour. Friburg and the Forest Cantons proved their docile instruments; Berne, Basle, Soleure, Glaris, and Appenzel were undecided. Schaffhausen was inclining towards the Gospel; but Zurich alone stood forward boldly in its defense. The partisans of Rome urged the assembly to yield to their demands and prejudices. "Let the people be forbidden," said they, "to preach or repeat any new or Lutheran doctrine in private or in public, and to talk or dispute about such things in taverns and over their wine." Such was the ecclesiastical law they were desirous of establishing in the confederation.

Nineteen articles were drawn up to this effect, approved of by all the states, except Zurich, on the 26th of January 1523, and sent to all the bailiffs with orders to see that they were strictly observed: "which caused great joy among the priests," says Bullinger, "and great sorrow among believers." A persecution, regularly organised by the supreme authority of the confederation, was about to begin. One of the first who received the mandate of the diet was Henry Flackenstein of Lucerne, bailiff of Baden. Hottinger, when banished from Zurich for pulling down the crucifix of Stadelhofen, had retired to this bailiwick, where he had not concealed his opinions. One day, as he chanced to be dining at the Angel tavern in Zurzach, he had said that the priests wrongly interpreted Holy Scripture, and that man should put his trust in God alone. The landlord, who was continually going in and out to bring bread and wine, listened to what appeared to him such very extraordinary language. Another day, Hottinger paid a visit to his friend John Schutz of Schneyssingen. After they had eaten and drunk together, Schutz asked him: "What is this new faith that the Zurich pastors are preaching?" "They preach," replied Hottinger, "that Christ was sacrificed once for all Christians; that by this one sacrifice he has purified and redeemed them from all their sins; and they show by Holy Scripture that the mass is a lie."

After this (in February 1523), Hottinger had quitted Switzerland, and gone on business to Waldshut, on the other side of the Rhine. Measures were taken to seize his person, and about the end of the same month the poor unsuspecting Zuricher, having recrossed the river, had scarcely reached Coblentz, a village on the left bank of the Rhine, before he was arrested. He was taken to Klingenau, and as he there frankly confessed his faith, the exasperated Flackenstein [401] said: "I will take you to a place where you will find people to make you a suitable answer."

In effect, the bailiff conducted him successively before the judges of Klingenau, before the superior tribunal of Baden, and, since he could find no one who would declare him guilty, before the diet sitting at Lucerne. He was firmly resolved to seek judges who would condemn his prisoner.

The diet lost not time, and condemned Hottinger to be beheaded. When informed of his sentence, he gave glory to God: "That will do," said James Troger, one of his judges, "we do not sit here to listen to sermons. You can have your talk some other time." "He must have his head taken off this once," said the bailiff Am Ort, with a laugh; "if he should ever get it on again, we will all embrace his faith." "May God forgive all those who have condemned me," said the prisoner. A monk then presented a crucifix to his lips, but he put it away, saying: "It is in the heart that we must receive Jesus Christ."

When he was led out to execution, many of the spectators could not refrain from tears. "I am going to eternal happiness," said he, turning towards them. On reaching the place where he was to die, he raised his hands to heaven, exclaiming: "Into thy hands, O my Redeemer, I commit my spirit!" In another minute his head rolled upon the scaffold.

The blood of Hottinger was hardly cold before the enemies of the Reformation seized the opportunity of still further inflaming the anger of the confederates. It was in Zurich itself that the mischief should be crushed. The terrible example that had just been given must have filled Zwingle and his partisans with terror. Another vigorous effort, and the death of Hottinger would be followed by that of the Reform The diet immediately resolved that a deputation should be sent to Zurich, calling upon the councils and the citizens to renounce their faith.

The deputation received an audience on the 21st of March. "The ancient christian unity is broken," said the deputies; "the disease is gaining ground; already have the clergy of the four Forest Cantons declared, that unless the magistrates come to their aid, they must discontinue their functions. Confederates of Zurich, join your efforts

to ours; stifle this new faith; dismiss Zwingle and his disciples, and then let us all unite to remedy the injuries that have been inflicted on the popes and their courtiers."

Thus spoke the adversaries: and what would the citizens of Zurich do? Would their hearts fail them? Had their courage cooled with the blood of their fellow-citizen?

Zurich did not leave her friends or enemies long in suspense. The council announced calmly and nobly that they could make no concessions in what concerned the Word of God; and then proceeded to make a still more forcible reply.

Ever since the year 1351, it had been customary for a numerous procession, each member of which bore a cross, to go on Whitmonday on a pilgrimage to Einsidlen to worship the Virgin. This festival, which had been established in commemoration of the battle of Tatwyll, was attended with great disorders. The procession should have taken place on the 7th of May. On the petition of the three pastors it was prohibited by the council, and all the other processions were reformed in their turn.

They did not stop here. The relics, that source of innumerable superstitions, were honourably interred; and then, at the request of the three pastors, the council published a decree, to the effect that honour being due to God alone, the images should be removed from all the churches of the canton, and their ornaments sold for the benefit of the poor. Twelve councillors, one from each guild, the three pastors, the city-architect, blacksmiths, carpenters, builders, and masons, went into the various churches, and having closed the doors, took down the crosses, defaced the frescoes, whitewashed the walls, and took away the images, to the great delight of the believers, who regarded this proceeding (says Bullinger) as a striking homage paid to the true God. In some of the country churches, the ornaments were burnt "to the honour and glory of God." Erelong the organs were taken down, on account of their connection with many superstitious practices; and a baptismal service was drawn up, from which everything unscriptural was excluded.

The burgomaster Roust and his colleague, with their dying eyes joyfully hailed the triumph of the Reformation. They had lived long enough, and they died at the very time of this great renovation of public worship.

The Swiss Reformation here presents itself under an aspect somewhat different from that of the German Reformation. Luther had risen up against the excesses of those who had broken the images in the churches of Wittenberg; and in Zwingle's presence the idols fell in the temples of Zurich. This difference is explained by the different lights in which the two reformers viewed the same object. Luther desired to

maintain in the Church all that was not expressly contrary to the Scriptures, and Zwingle to abolish all that could not be proved by them. The German reformer wished to remain united to the Church of the preceding ages, and was content to purify it of all that was opposed to the Word of God. The Zurich reformer [402] passed over these ages, returned to the apostolic times, and, carrying out an entire transformation of the Church, endeavoured to restore it to its primitive condition.

Zwingle's Reformation was therefore the more complete. The work that Providence had confided to Luther, the restoration of the doctrine of justification by faith, was doubtless the great work of the Reformation; but when this was accomplished, others remained to be done, which, although secondary, were still important; and to these Zwingle's exertions were more especially directed.

In fact, two mighty tasks had been imposed on the reformers. Christian Catholicism, born in the midst of Jewish pharisaism and Greek paganism, had gradually felt the influence of these two religions, which had transformed it into Roman Catholicism. The Reformation that was called to purify the Church, was destined to purge it alike from the Jewish and the pagan element.

The Jewish element prevailed chiefly in that part of the christian doctrine which relates to man. Catholicism had received from Judaism the pharisaical ideas of self-righteousness, of salvation by human strength or works.

The pagan element prevailed especially in that part of the christian doctrine which relates to God. Paganism had corrupted in the catholic church the idea of an infinite Deity whose power, being perfectly all-sufficient, is at work in all times and in all places. It had established in the Church the reign of symbols, images, and ceremonies; and the saints had become the demigods of popery.

Luther's reform was directed essentially against the Jewish element. It was against this element that he had been compelled to struggle, when an impudent monk on behalf of the pope was making a trade of the salvation of souls. Zwingle's reform was particularly directed against the pagan element. It was this element with which he had come in contact at the temple of our Lady of Einsidlen, when a crowd, gathered together from every side, fell down blindly before a gilded idol, as of old in the temple of the Ephesian Diana.

The German reformer proclaimed the great doctrine of justification by faith, and with it inflicted a death-blow on the pharisaical righteousness of Rome. The reformer of Switzerland unquestionably did the same; the inability of man to save himself

forms the basis of the work of all the reformers. But Zwingle did something more: he established the sovereign, universal, and exclusive agency of God, and thus inflicted a deadly blow on the pagan worship of Rome.

Roman Catholicism had exalted man and lowered God. Luther lowered man, and Zwingle exalted God. These two tasks, which were specially but not exclusively theirs, were the complement of each other. Luther laid the foundation of the building; Zwingle raised its crowning stone. It was reserved for a still more capacious genius to impress, from the banks of the Leman lake, these two characters conjointly upon the Reformation.

But while Zwingle was thus advancing with mighty strides to the head of the confederation, the disposition of the cantons became daily more hostile. The Zurich government felt the necessity of relying on the people. The people, moreover, that is to say the assembly of believers, was, according to Zwingle's principles, the highest power to which there could be any appeal on earth. It was resolved to test the state of public opinion, and the bailiffs were enjoined to demand of all the parishes whether they were ready to suffer everything for our Lord Jesus Christ, "who," said the council, "gave his life and his blood for us sinners." The whole canton had carefully followed the progress of the Reformation in the city; and in many places, the cottages of the peasants had become christian schools, wherein the Holy Scriptures were read.

The proclamation of the council was read and enthusiastically received in every parish. "Let our lords," answered they, "remain fearlessly attached to the Word of God: we will aid them in upholding it; and if anyone seeks to molest them, we will come to their support like brave and loyal fellow-citizens." The peasantry of Zurich showed then, that the strength of the Church is in the christian people.

But the people were not alone. The man whom God had placed at their head answered worthily to the call. Zwingle appeared to multiply himself for the service of God. All that were enduring persecution in the Helvetic cantons for the cause of the Gospel addressed themselves to him. The responsibility of public affairs, the care of the churches, the anxieties of the glorious conflict that was going on in every valley of Switzerland, weighed heavily upon the evangelist of Zurich. At Wittenberg, the news of his courageous proceedings was received with joy. Luther and Zwingle were two great lights, placed in Upper and Lower Germany; and the doctrine of salvation, so powerfully proclaimed by both, filled the vast tracts that extend from the summit of the Alps to the shores of the Baltic and of the North Sea.

CHAPTER 5

New Opposition—Abduction of Oexlin—The Family of the Wirths—The Populace at the Convent of Ittingen—The Diet of Zug—The Wirths apprehended and given up to the Diet—Their Condemnation

The Word of God could not thus invade extensive countries, without its triumphs exasperating the pope in his palace, the priest in his presbytery, and the Swiss magistrates in their councils. Their terror increased from day to day. The people had been consulted; the christian people became of consequence in the Christian Church, and appeals were made to their sympathy and faith and not to the decrees of the Roman chancery! So formidable an attack required a still more formidable resistance. On the 18th of April, the pope addressed a brief to the confederates, and the diet, which met at Zug in the month of July, yielding to the urgent exhortations of the pontiff, sent a deputation to Zurich, Schaffhausen, and Appenzel, commissioned to acquaint these states with the firm resolve of the diet to crush the new doctrine, and to prosecute its adherents to the forfeiture of their goods, their honours, and even their lives.

Zurich did not hear this warning without emotion; but a firm reply was made, that, in matters of faith, the Word of God alone must be obeyed. On receiving this answer, Lucerne, Schwytz, Uri, Unterwalden, Friburg, and Zug, trembled with rage; and, unmindful of the reputation and strength the accession of Zurich had formerly given to the infant confederation, forgetting the precedence that had been immediately accorded to her, the simple and solemn oaths that had been made to her, and of the many victories and reverses they had shared with her,—these states declared that they would no longer sit in diet with Zurich. Thus in Switzerland, as in Germany, the partisans of Rome were the first to break the federal unity. But threats and the rupture of alliances were not enough. The fanaticism of the cantons called for blood; and it was soon seen with what arms Rome intended combating the Word of God.

One of Zwingle's friends, the worthy Oexlin, was pastor of Burg upon the Rhine, in the neighbourhood of Stein. The bailiff AmBerg, who had appeared to listen to the Gospel with delight, being desirous of obtaining that bailiwick, had promised the leading men of Schwytz to root out the new faith. Oexlin, although not within his jurisdiction, was the first upon whom he exercised his severity.

About midnight, on the 7th of July 1524, some persons knocked at the pastor's door; they were the bailiff's soldiers who entered the house, seized Oexlin, and carried

him away prisoner, in defiance of his cries. Thinking they meant to assassinate him, he cried "Murder;" the inhabitants started from their beds in affright, and the village soon became the scene of a frightful tumult, which was heard as far as Stein. The sentinel on guard at the castle of Hohenklingen fired the alarm-gun; the tocsin was rung, and the inhabitants of Stein, Stammheim, and the adjoining places, were soon moving, and inquiring of one another in the darkness what was the matter.

At Stammheim lived the deputy-bailiff Wirth, whose two eldest sons, Adrian and John, both young priests full of piety and courage, were preaching the Gospel with great unction. John especially abounded in faith, and was ready to sacrifice his life for his Saviour. This was truly a patriarchal family. Hannah, the mother, who had borne the bailiff many children, and brought them up in the fear of the Lord, was revered for her virtues throughout the whole district. At the noise of the tumult in Burg, the father and the two eldest sons went out like their neighbours. The father was indignant that the bailiff of Frauenfeld should have exercised his authority in a manner contrary to the laws of the country. The sons learned with sorrow that their brother, their friend, the man whose good example they were delighted to follow, had been dragged away like a criminal. Each of them seized a halberd, and in spite of the fears of a tender wife and mother, the father and his two sons joined the band of citizens of Stein with the determination of rescuing their pastor. Unhappily, a number of those miscreants who make their appearance in every disorder had joined the expedition; they pursued the bailiff's officers; the latter, hearing the tocsin and the shouts of alarm, redoubled their speed, dragging their victim after them, and soon placed the river Thur between themselves and their pursuers.

When the people of Stein and Stammheim reached the bank of the river, and found no means of crossing, they halted, and resolved to send a deputation to Frauenfeld. "Oh!" said the bailiff Wirth, "the pastor of Stein is so dear to us, that for his sake I would willingly sacrifice my goods, my liberty, and my life." The populace, finding themselves near the Carthusian convent of Ittingen, whose inmates were believed to have encouraged the tyranny of the bailiff AmBerg, entered the building and took possession of the refectory. These miserable wretches soon became intoxicated, and shameful disorders were the consequence. Wirth vainly entreated them to leave the convent; he was in danger of being maltreated by them. His son Adrian remained outside the cloister. John entered, but soon came out again, distressed at what he had seen. The drunken peasants proceeded to ransack the wine-cellars and the store-rooms, to break the furniture, and burn the books.

When the news of these disorders reached Zurich, some deputies from the council hastened to the spot, and ordered all persons under the jurisdiction of the canton to

return to their homes. They did so immediately. But a body of Thurgovians, attracted by the disturbance, established themselves in the convent, for the sake of its good cheer. On a sudden a fire broke out, no one knew how, and the monastery was burnt to the ground.

Five days after this, the deputies of the cantons met at Zug. Nothing was heard in the assembly but threats of vengeance and death. "Let us march with banners flying on Stein and Stammheim," said they, "and put the inhabitants to the sword." The deputy-bailiff and his two sons had long been objects of especial dislike on account of their faith. "If anyone is guilty," said the deputy of Zurich, "he must be punished, but according to the laws of justice, and not by violence." Vadian, deputy of St. Gall, supported this opinion. Upon this the avoyer John Hug of Lucerne, unable to contain himself any longer, exclaimed with frightful imprecations: "The heretic Zwingle is the father of all these insurrections; and you too, doctor of St. Gall, are favourable to his infamous cause, and aid him in securing its triumphs You ought no longer to have a seat among us." The deputy of Zug endeavoured to restore peace, but in vain. Vadian left the hall, and as the populace had designs upon his life, he quitted the town secretly, and reached the convent of Cappel by a circuitous route.

Zurich, intent on suppressing every disorder, resolved to apprehend provisionally those persons who were marked out by the rage of the confederates. Wirth and his two sons were living quietly at Stammheim. "Never will the enemies of God be able to vanquish His friends," said Adrian Wirth from the pulpit. The father was warned of the fate impending over him, and was entreated to flee with his two sons. "No," answered he; "I will wait for the officers, putting my trust in God." And when the soldiers made their appearance at his house, he said: "My lords of Zurich might have spared themselves all this trouble: if they had only sent a child I should have obeyed their summons." The three Wirths were taken to Zurich and put in prison. Rutiman, bailiff of Nussbaum, shared their fate. They were strictly examined, but nothing reprehensible was found in their conduct.

As soon as the deputies of the cantons had heard of the imprisonment of these four citizens, they required them to be sent to Baden, and ordered that in case of refusal their troops should march upon Zurich and carry them off by force. "To Zurich belongs the right of ascertaining whether these men are guilty or not," said the deputies of that state; "and we have found no fault in them." On this the deputies of the cantons exclaimed: "Will you surrender them to us? Answer yes or no, and not a word more." Two deputies of Zurich mounted their horses, and rode off with all haste to their constituents. On their arrival, the whole town was in agitation. If the prisoners were refused, the confederates would come and seek them with an armed

force; to give them up was consenting to their death. Opinions were divided: Zwingle declared for their refusal. "Zurich," said he, "ought to remain faithful to its constitution." At last it was supposed a middle course had been found. "We will deliver the prisoners into your hands," said they to the diet, "but on condition that you will examine them solely with regard to the affair of Ittingen, and not on their faith." The diet acceded to this proposition, and on the Friday before St. Bartholomew's day (18th August 1524) the three Wirths and their friend, accompanied by four councillors of state and several armed men, quitted Zurich.

A deep concern was felt by all the city at the prospect of the fate which awaited the two youths and their aged companions. Sobbing alone was heard as they passed along. "Alas!" exclaims a contemporary, "what a mournful procession!" The churches were all filled. "God will punish us!" cried Zwingle. "Let us at least pray him to impart his grace to these poor prisoners, and to strengthen them in the faith."

On Friday evening the accused arrived at Baden, where an immense crowd was waiting for them. At first they were taken to an inn, and thence to prison. They could scarcely advance, the crowd so pressed around to catch a sight of them. The father, who walked in front, turned towards his two sons, and observed to them meekly: "See, my dear children, we are (as the apostle says) men appointed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men" (1 Corinthians 4:9). Then, as he saw among the crowd his deadly enemy, Am-Berg, the cause of all his misfortunes, he went up to him and held out his hand, although the bailiff would have turned away: "There is a God in heaven who knows all things," said he calmly, as he grasped his adversary's hand.

The examination began on the following day: the bailiff Wirth was first brought in. He was put to the torture, without any regard to his character or his age; but he persisted in declaring his innocence of the pillage and burning of Ittingen. He was then accused of having destroyed an image representing St. Anne. Nothing could be substantiated against the other prisoners, except that Adrian Wirth was married, and preached after the manner of Zwingle and Luther; and that John Wirth had given the sacrament to a sick man without bell and taper.

But the more apparent their innocence, the greater was the fury of their adversaries. From morning until noon they inflicted the cruelest tortures on the old man. His tears could not soften his judges. John Wirth was treated with still greater barbarity. "Tell us," they asked him in the midst of his anguish, "whence did you learn this heretical faith? From Zwingle or from any other person?" And when he exclaimed, "O merciful and everlasting God, help and comfort me!" "Where is your Christ now?"

said one of the deputies. When Adrian appeared, Sebastian of Stein, the Bernese deputy, said to him: "Young man, tell us the truth; for if you refuse to do so, I swear by the knighthood that I gained on the very spot where the Lord suffered martyrdom, that we will open your veins one after another." They then fastened the young man to a rope, and hoisted him into the air: "There, my little master," said Stein with a devilish sneer, "there is your wedding present;" alluding to the marriage of this youthful servant of the Lord.

When the examination was ended, the deputies returned to their cantons to deliver their report, and did not meet again till four weeks after. The bailiff's wife, the mother of the two priests, repaired to Baden, carrying an infant child in her arms, to intercede with the judges. John Escher of Zurich accompanied her as her advocate. Among the judges he saw Jerome Stocker, landamman of Zug, who had been twice bailiff of Frauenfeld: "Landamman!" said he, "you know the bailiff Wirth; you know that he has always been an upright man."—"You say the truth, my dear Escher," replied Stocker, "he has never injured anybody; fellow-citizens and strangers were always kindly welcomed to his table; his house was a convent, an inn, and an hospital; and so, if he had committed robbery or murder, I would have made every exertion to obtain his pardon. But seeing that he has burnt Saint Anne, Christ's grandmother, he must die!"—"The Lord have mercy upon us," exclaimed Escher.

The gates were now shut: it was the 28th September, and the deputies of Berne, Lucerne, Uri, Schwytz, Unterwalden, Zug, Glaris, Friburg, and Soleure, having proceeded to deliberate on their judgment with closed doors, as was customary, passed sentence of death on the bailiff Wirth, on his son John, who was the firmest in his faith, and who appeared to have led away the others, and on the bailiff Rutiman. Adrian, the second son, was granted to his mother's tears. The officers proceeded to the tower to fetch the prisoners. "My son," said the father to Adrian, "never avenge our death, although we have not deserved punishment." Adrian burst into tears. "Brother," said John, "the cross of Christ must always follow his Word."

After the sentence was read, the three Christians were led back to prison; John Wirth walking first, the two vice-bailiffs next, and a priest behind them. As they were crossing the castle bridge, on which was a chapel dedicated to St. Joseph, the priest called out to the two old men, "Fall down and call upon the saints." John Wirth, who was in front, turned round at these words and said, "Father, be firm. You know that there is only one Mediator between God and man, the Lord Jesus Christ."—"Assuredly, my son," replied the old man, "and by the help of His grace I will continue faithful even to the end." Upon this they all three began to repeat the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father which art in heaven," and so crossed the bridge.

They were next conducted to the scaffold. John Wirth, whose heart was filled with the tenderest anxiety for his parent, bade him farewell. "My dearly beloved father," said he, "henceforward thou art no longer my father, and I am no longer thy son, but we are brothers in Christ our Lord, for whose name we must suffer death. Today, if it be God's pleasure, my beloved brother, we shall go to Him who is the Father of us all. Fear nothing." "Amen!" replied the old man, "and may God Almighty bless thee, my beloved son and brother in Christ!"

Thus, on the threshold of eternity, did father and son take leave of each other, hailing the new mansions in which they should be united by everlasting ties. The greater part of those around them shed floods of tears. The bailiff Rutiman prayed in silence.

All three then knelt down "in Christ's name," and their heads rolled upon the scaffold. The crowd, observing the marks of torture upon their bodies, gave loud utterance to their grief. The two bailiffs left twenty-two children, and forty-five grandchildren. Hannah was obliged to pay twelve golden crowns to the executioner who had deprived her husband and her son of life.

Thus blood, innocent blood, had been shed. Switzerland and the Reformation were baptised with the blood of the martyrs. The great enemy of the Gospel had done his work; but in doing it, his power was broken. The death of the Wirths was to accelerate the triumphs of the Reformation.

CHAPTER 6

Abolition of the Mass—Zwingle's Dream—Celebration of the Lord's Supper—Fraternal Charity—Original Sin—The Oligarchs opposed to the Reform—Various Attacks

It was not thought desirable to proceed to the abolition of the mass in Zurich immediately after the suppression of images; but now the proper moment seemed to have arrived.

Not only had the light of the Gospel diffused among the people; but the violence of the blows struck by the enemy called upon the friends of God to reply to them by some impressive demonstration of their unalterable fidelity. Every time that Rome erects a scaffold, and that heads fall upon it, the Reformation will exalt the holy Word of the Lord, and throw down some abuses. When Hottinger was executed, Zurich suppressed images; and now that the heads of the Wirths have rolled on the ground, Zurich will reply by the abolition of the mass. The more Rome increases her cruelties, the more will the Reformation increase in strength.

On the 11th of April 1525, the three pastors of Zurich, accompanied by Megander and Oswald Myconius, appeared before the Great Council, and demanded the re-establishment of the Lord's Supper. Their language was solemn; all minds were absorbed in meditation; every man felt the importance of the resolution which the council was called upon to take. The mass, that mystery which for more than three centuries had been the very soul of the religious service of the Latin Church, was to be abolished, the corporeal presence of Christ to be declared an illusion, and the illusion itself removed from the minds of the people. Courage was needed to arrive at such a resolution, and there were men in the council who shuddered at this daring thought. Joachim Am-Grutt, under-secretary of state, alarmed at the bold demand of the pastors, opposed it with all his might. "

These words, This is my body," said he, "unquestionably prove that the bread is the body of Christ himself." Zwingle observed that esti (is) is the proper word in the Greek language to express signifies, and he quoted several instances in which this word is employed in a figurative sense. The Great Council were convinced and did not hesitate; the Gospel doctrines had penetrated their hearts; besides, as they were separating from the Church of Rome, there was a certain satisfaction in making that separation as complete as possible, and in digging a gulf between it and the Reformation. The council, therefore, ordered the mass to be suppressed, and decreed

that on the next day, Holy Thursday, the Lord's Supper should be celebrated in conformity with the apostolical usages.

Zwingle was seriously engrossed by these thoughts, and when he closed his eyes at night, was still seeking for arguments with which to oppose his adversaries. The subjects that had so strongly occupied his mind during the day present themselves before him in a dream. He fancied that he was disputing with Am-Grutt, and that he could not reply to his principal objection. Suddenly a figure stood before him and said: "Why do you not quote the 11th verse of the 12th Chapter of Exodus: Ye shall eat it (the lamb) in haste: it is the Lord's passover?" Zwingle awoke, sprung out of bed, took up the Septuagint translation, and there found the same word esti (is), which all are agreed is synonymous with signifies in this passage.

Here then, in the institution of the paschal feast under the old covenant, is the very meaning that Zwingle defends. How can he avoid concluding that the two passages are parallel?

On the following day Zwingle preached a sermon on this text, and spoke so forcibly that he removed every doubt. This circumstance, which admits of so simple an explanation, and the very expression Zwingle employs to show that he could not recall the appearance of the figure he had seen in his dream, have given rise to the assertion that Zwingle received this doctrine from the devil.

The altars had disappeared; plain tables bearing the sacramental bread and wine were substituted in their place, and an attentive crowd pressed round them. There was something particularly solemn in this multitude. On Holy Thursday, the young people,—on Friday, the day of the Passion, the adult men and women,—and on Easter Sunday, the aged, celebrated in turn the death of the Lord.

The deacons read aloud the passages of Scripture that relate to this sacrament; the pastors addressed the flock in an earnest exhortation, calling upon all to retire from this sacred feast who, by persevering in their sin, would pollute the body of Jesus Christ. The [407] people knelt down, the bread was carried round on large platters or wooden plates, and each one broke off a morsel; the wine was next distributed in wooden goblets: in this manner it was thought they made a nearer approach to the simplicity of the primitive Supper. Emotions of surprise or joy filled every heart.

Thus was the Reform carried on in Zurich. The simple celebration of the Lord's Supper appeared to have shed anew over the Church the love of God and of the brethren. The words of Jesus Christ were once more spirit and life. While the different

orders and parties in the Church of Rome were incessantly disputing among themselves, the first effect of the Gospel was to restore charity among the brethren. The love of the first ages was then revived in Christendom. Enemies were seen renouncing their long-cherished and inveterate enmities, and embracing one another after having partaken of the sacramental bread. Zwingle, delighted at these affecting manifestations, returned thanks to God that the Lord's Supper was again working those miracles of charity which the sacrifice of the mass had long ceased to accomplish.

"Peace dwells in our city," exclaimed he; "among us there is no fraud, no dissension, no envying, no strife. Whence can proceed such harmony except from the Lord, and that the doctrine we preach inclines us to innocence and peace?"

Charity and unity then prevailed, although there was no uniformity. Zwingle in his Commentary on True and False Religion, which he dedicated to Francis I in March 1525, the year of the battle of Pavia, had put forward some truths in the manner best calculated to procure their reception by human reason, following in this respect the example of several of the most distinguished scholastic divines. In this way he had given the name of disease to our original corruption, and reserved the appellation of sin for the actual transgression of the law. But these statements, which called forth some objections, did not however interrupt brotherly love; for Zwingle, even when he persisted in calling original sin a disease, added, that all men were lost by this disease, and that Jesus Christ was the only remedy. In this position there is no error of Pelagianism.

But while the celebration of the Lord's Supper at Zurich was attended by a return to christian brotherhood, Zwingle and his friends had to support a severer struggle against their adversaries from without. Zwingle was not only a christian teacher, he was also a true patriot; and we know how zealously he contended against the foreign capitulations, pensions, and alliances. He felt convinced that these external influences must tend to destroy piety, blind the reason, and scatter discord on every side. But his bold protests were destined to prejudice the advancement of the Reformation. In almost every canton, the chiefs who received the pensions of the foreigner, and the officers who led the youth of Helvetia to battle, formed powerful factions, formidable oligarchies, that attacked the Reformation, not so much on behalf of the Church as on account of the injury it would inflict on their interests and honours. They had already gained the victory in Schwytz; and that canton, where Zwingle, Leo Juda, and Oswald Myconius had taught, and which seemed as if it would walk in the footsteps of Zurich, had suddenly reverted to the mercenary capitulations, and shut its gates against the Reformation.

Even in Zurich, some wretches, instigated by foreign intrigues, attacked Zwingle during the night, flung stones at his house, broke the windows, and called with loud cries for "the red haired Uli, the vulture of Glaris;" so that Zwingle awoke from his sleep and ran to his sword. This action is very characteristic of the man.

But these isolated attacks could not paralyze the movement by which Zurich was carried onward, and which was beginning to shake all Switzerland. They were pebbles thrown into a torrent to check its course. Everywhere its waters were swelling, threatening to sweep away the most formidable obstacles.

The Bernese having informed the people of Zurich that several states had refused to sit with them in future in the diet: "Well, then," replied these men of Zurich with calmness, and raising their hands towards heaven, as the heroes of Rutli in old time, "we have the firm assurance that God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in whose name the confederation was formed, will not desert us, and will at last, of his great mercy, make us sit at the right hand of his sovereign majesty." Possessing such faith the Reformation had nothing to victories in the other states of the confederation? Would not Zurich remain alone on the side of God's Word? Would Berne, Basle, and other cantons remain subject to the power of Rome? This we shall soon see. Let us therefore turn towards Berne, and study the progress of the Reformation in the [408] most influential state of the confederation.

CHAPTER 7

Berne—The Provost Watteville—First Successes of the Reformed Doctrines—Haller at the Convent—Accusation and Deliverance—The Monastery of Konigsfeldt—Margaret Watteville to Zwingle—The Convent opened—Two Champions—Clara May and the Provost Watteville

Nowhere was the struggle likely to be so severe as at Berne, for there the Gospel counted both powerful friends and formidable adversaries. At the head of the reforming party were the banneret John Weingarten, Bartholomew May, member of the Smaller Council, his sons Wolfgang and Claudius, his grandsons James and Benedict, and above all, the family of the Wattevilles. The avoyer James Watteville, who since 1512 had occupied the first station in the republic, had early read the writings of Luther and Zwingle, and had often conversed about the Gospel with John Haller, pastor of Anseltingen, whom he had protected against his persecutors.

His son Nicholas, then thirty-one years of age, had been for two years provost of the church of Berne, and as such, by virtue of the papal ordinances, enjoyed great privileges; accordingly Berthold Haller used to call him "our bishop."

The prelates and the pope spared no endeavours to bind him to the interests of Rome; and it seemed as if everything would keep him from a knowledge of the Gospel; but the ways of God are more powerful than the flatteries of man. Watteville was turned from darkness to the mild light of the Gospel, says Zwingle. As a friend of Berthold Haller, he read all the letters which the latter received from Zwingle, and could not find language to express his admiration. The influence of the two Wattevilles, one of whom was at the head of the state and the other of the church, would apparently draw after it the whole republic. But the opposite party was not less powerful.

Amongst its leaders were the schulthess of Erlach, the banneret Willading, and many patricians whose interests were identical with those of the convents under their administration. Behind these influential men were an ignorant and corrupted clergy, who called the evangelical doctrine "an invention of hell."—"My dear confederates," said the councillor Mullinen before a full assembly in the month of July, "take care that this Reformation does not come here; at Zurich a man is not safe in his own house, and he is obliged to have a guard to protect him." Accordingly they invited to Berne the reader of the Dominicans of Mentz, one John Hein, who went into the pulpit and declaimed against the Reformation with the eloquence of a Saint Thomas.

Thus were the two parties drawn up in battle-array against each other; a struggle seemed inevitable, and already the result did not appear doubtful. In fact, one common faith united a part of the people to the most distinguished families of the state. Berthold Haller exclaimed, full of confidence in the future: "Unless God's anger be turned against us, it is not possible for the Word of God to be banished from this city, for the Bernese are hungering after it!"

Shortly after this two acts of the government appeared to incline the balance to the side of the Reformation. The Bishop of Lausanne having announced an episcopal visitation, the council intimated to him through the provost Watteville, that he had better refrain from so doing. And at the same time the councils of Berne issued an ordinance which, whilst in appearance it conceded something to the enemies of the Reformation, sanctioned the principles of the new doctrines. They decreed that the Gospel and the doctrine of God, as it is laid down by the books of the Old and New Testament, should be preached exclusively, freely, and openly; and that the ministers should abstain from every doctrine, discussion, or writing, proceeding from Luther or other teachers. Great was the surprise of the adversaries of the Reformation when they saw the evangelical preachers boldly appealing to this ordinance.

This decree, which was the basis of all those that succeeded, was the legal commencement of the Reformation in Berne. From that time the progress of this canton was more decided, and Zwingle, whose attentive eyes watched everything that was passing in Switzerland, was able to write to the provost Watteville: "All Christians are overjoyed, on account of the faith which the pious city of Berne has just received."—"The cause is the cause of Christ," exclaimed the friends of the Gospel; and they devoted themselves to it with an increase of courage.

The enemies of the Reformation, alarmed at these first advantages, closed their ranks, and resolved to strike a blow that would [409] secure their victory. They conceived the project of getting rid of these ministers whose bold discourses were overthrowing the most timehonoured customs; and it was not long before a favourable opportunity occurred. There existed in Berne, on the spot now occupied by the hospital of the Island, a convent of nuns of St. Dominic, consecrated to St. Michael. The anniversary of the archangel (29th September) was a great festival at the monastery. Many of the clergy were present this year, and among others Wittenbach of Bienne, Sebastian Meyer, and Berthold Haller. Having entered into conversation with the nuns, among whom was Clara, daughter of Claudius May, a supporter of the Reformation, Haller said to her, in the presence of her grandmother: "The merits of the conventual life are imaginary, whilst marriage is an honourable state, instituted by God himself." Some of the nuns to whom Clara repeated Berthold's words were

horrified at them. "Haller maintains," was the rumour in the city, "that all nuns are children of the devil." The opportunity which the enemies of the Reformation were looking for was found. Going before the Smaller Council, they referred to an ancient law which enacted that whoever carried off a nun from her convent should lose his head, but asked for a mitigation of the penalty, and that, without giving the three ministers a hearing, they should be banished for life. The Smaller Council acceded to their prayer, and the matter was immediately carried before the Great Council.

Thus was Berne about to be deprived of her reformers: the intrigues of the papal party were successful. But Rome, who triumphed when she addressed herself to the oligarchs, was beaten before the people or their representatives. Scarcely had they heard the names of Haller, Meyer, and Wittembach, men whom all Switzerland venerated, than an energetic opposition was manifested by the Great Council against the Smaller Council and the clergy. "We cannot condemn the accused unheard," exclaimed Tillmann; "their testimony is surely as good as that of a few women." The ministers were called before them: the affair was embarrassing. At length John Weingarten said: "Let us give credit to both parties." They did so: the ministers were discharged, with an intimation to confine themselves to their pulpits, and not to meddle with the cloisters. But the pulpit was sufficient for them. The efforts of their adversaries had redounded to their own disgrace. It was a great victory for the Reformation. Accordingly one of the patricians exclaimed: "It is all over now: Luther's affair must go forward."

And it did in fact go forward, and in the very places where they expected it the least. At Konigsfeldt, on the Aar, near the castle of Hapsburg, stood a monastery adorned with all the conventual magnificence of the Middle Ages, and where reposed the ashes of several members of that illustrious house which had given so many emperors to Germany. Here the daughters of the greatest families of Switzerland and Swabia used to take the veil. It was not far from the spot where, on the 1st of May 1308, the Emperor Albert had fallen by the hand of his nephew John of Swabia; and the beautiful painted windows of the church of Konigsfeldt represented the horrible punishments that had been inflicted on the relations and vassals of the murderer. Catherine of Waldburg-Truchsess, abbess of the convent at the period of the Reformation, numbered among her nuns Beatrice of Landenberg, sister to the Bishop of Constance, Agnes of Mullinen, Catherine of Bonstetten, and Margaret of Watteville, the provost's sister.

The liberty enjoyed in this convent, which in former times had given room for scandalous disorders, now permitted the Holy Scriptures with the writings of Zwingle and Luther to be introduced; and soon a new life entirely changed its aspect. Near

that cell to which Queen Agnes, Albert's daughter, had retired, after having bathed in torrents of blood as in "maydew," and where, plying the distaff or embroidering ornaments for the church, she had mingled exercises of devotion with thoughts of vengeance,—Margaret Watteville had only thoughts of peace, and divided her time between reading the Scriptures and compounding salutary ingredients to form an excellent electuary. Retiring to her cell, this youthful nun had the boldness to write to the doctor of Switzerland. Her letter displays to us, better than any reflections could do, the christian spirit that existed in those pious women, who are still so grievously calumniated even in our own days.

"May grace and peace in the Lord Jesus be given and multiplied towards you always by God our heavenly Father," wrote the nun of Konigsfeldt to Zwingle. "Most learned, reverend, and dear Sir, I entreat you to take in good part the letter I now address to you. The love which is in Christ constrains me to do so, especially since I have learnt that the doctrine of salvation is spreading day by day through your preaching of the Word of God. For this reason I give praise to the everlasting God for enlightening us anew, and sending us by his Holy Spirit so many heralds of His blessed Word; and at the same time I offer up my ardent prayers that he will clothe with his strength both you and all those who proclaim His glad tidings, and that, arming you against all the enemies of the truth, He will cause his Divine Word to grow in all men. Very learned Sir, I venture to send your reverence this trifling mark of my affection; do not despise [410] it; it is an offering of christian charity. If this electuary does you good, and you should desire more, pray let me know; for it would be a great pleasure to me to do anything that was agreeable to you; and it is not I only who think thus, but all those who love the Gospel in our convent of Konigsfeldt. They salute your reverence in Jesus Christ, and we all commend you without ceasing to His almighty protection."Saturday before Laetare, 1523."

Such was the pious letter that the nun of Konigsfeldt wrote to the doctor of Switzerland. A convent into which the light of the Gospel had thus penetrated could not persevere in the observances of a monastic life. Margaret Watteville and her sisters, convinced that they could better serve God in the bosom of their families than in the cloister, asked permission to leave it. The council of Berne in alarm endeavoured at first to bring these nuns to reason, and the provincial and abbess employed threats and promises by turns; but the sisters Margaret, Agnes, Catherine, and their friends were not to be shaken. Upon this the discipline of the convent was relaxed, the nuns were exempted from fasting and matins, and their allowance was increased. "It is not the liberty of the flesh that we require," said they to the council; "it is that of the spirit. We, your poor and innocent prisoners, entreat you to have pity on us!"—"Our prisoners! our prisoners!" exclaimed the banneret Krauchthaler, "they

shall be no prisoners of mine!" This language from one of the firmest supporters of the convents decided the council; the convent gates were opened, and shortly after, Catherine Bonstetten was married to William of Diesbach.

And yet Berne, far from siding openly with the reformers, held a middle course, and endeavoured to pursue a see-saw system. An opportunity soon occurred for showing this vacillating procedure. Sebastian Meyer, reader of the Franciscans, published a retractation of his Romish errors, which created a great sensation, and in which, describing a conventual life, he said: "In the convents the monks live more impurely, fall more frequently, recover themselves more tardily, walk more unsteadily, rest more dangerously, are pitied more rarely, are cleansed more slowly, die more despairingly, and are condemned more severely." At the very time Meyer was thus denouncing the cloisters, John Heim, reader of the Dominicans, was exclaiming from the pulpit: "No! Christ has not, as the evangelists teach, made satisfaction to his Father once for all. It is further necessary that God should every day be reconciled to man by the sacrifice of the mass and by good works." Two citizens who chanced to be present, interrupted him by saying: "It is not true." There was immediately a great disturbance in the church; Heim remained silent; many persons urged him to continue, but he left the pulpit without finishing his sermon. On the morrow, the Great Council struck a blow at once against Rome and the Reformation; they turned the two great controversialists, Meyer and Heim, out of the city. "They are neither muddy nor clear," it was said of the Bernese, playing on the word Luther, which in old German signifies clear.

But in vain did they seek to stifle the Reformation in Berne. It was advancing on every side. The sisters of the convent of the Island had not forgotten Haller's visit. Clara May and several of her friends, anxiously pondering on what they ought to do, wrote to the learned Henry Bullinger. "St. Paul," replied he, "enjoins young women not to make vows, but to marry, and not to live in idleness under a false show of piety. (1 Timothy 5:13, 14.) Follow Jesus Christ in humility, charity, patience, purity, and kindness." Clara, praying for help from on high, resolved to adopt this advice, and renounce a life so contrary to the Word of God, invented by men, and fraught with temptation and sin. Her father Bartholomew, who had spent fifty years on the battle-field or in the council-chamber, heard of his [411] daughter's resolution with delight. Clara left the convent.

The provost Nicholas Watteville, whose whole interest bound him to the Roman hierarchy, and who was to be raised to the first vacant bishopric in Switzerland, also renounced his titles, his revenues, and his expectations, that he might preserve an unspotted conscience; and snapping all the bonds by which the popes had

endeavoured to entangle him, he entered into the marriage state, established by God from the creation of the world. Nicholas Watteville married Clara May; and about the same time, her sister Margaret, the nun of Konigsfeldt, was united to Lucius Tscharner of Coire.

CHAPTER 8

Basle—Oecolampadius—He visits Augsburg—Enters a Convent—Retires to Sickingen's Castle—Returns to Basle—Ulrich Hutten—His Plans—Last Effort of Chivalry—Hutten dies at Ufnau

Thus everything announced the triumphs that the Reformation would soon obtain at Berne. Basle, a city of no less importance, and which was then the Athens of Switzerland, was also arming herself for the great combat that has distinguished the sixteenth century.

Each of the cities of the confederation had its peculiar character. Berne was the city of the great families, and it seemed that the question would be decided by the part adopted by certain of the leading men. At Zurich, the ministers of the Word,—Zwingle, Leo Juda, Myconius, and Schmidt,—carried with them a powerful class of citizens. Lucerne was the city of arms and military capitulations; Basle, of learning and the printing-press. Here Erasmus, the head of the literary republic in the sixteenth century, had taken up his abode; and preferring the liberty he enjoyed in this capital to the flattering invitations of popes and kings, he had become the centre of a numerous concourse of men of letters.

But an humble, meek, and pious man, though in genius far inferior to Erasmus, was destined erelong to exercise in this very city a more powerful influence than that of the prince of the schools. Christopher of Utenheim, bishop of Basle, in concert with Erasmus, was endeavouring to surround himself with men fitted to accomplish a kind of half-way Reformation. With this view he had invited Capito and Oecolampadius to his court. In the latter person there was a taint of monasticism that often annoyed the illustrious philosopher. But Oecolampadius soon became enthusiastically attached to him; and perhaps would have lost all independence in this close intimacy, if Providence had not separated him from his idol. In 1517, he returned to Weinsberg, his native place, where he was soon disgusted with the disorders and profane jests of the priests. He has left us a noble monument of the serious spirit which then animated him, in his celebrated work on The Easter Revels, which appears to have been written about that time.

Having been invited to Augsburg about the end of 1518, as cathedral preacher, he found that city still agitated by the famous conference held there in the month of May between Luther and the papal legate. He had to decide between one party and the other; Oecolampadius did not hesitate, and declared in favour of the reformer. This frankness soon gave rise to a violent opposition against him; and feeling

convinced that his timidity and the weakness of his voice would be prejudicial to his success in the world, he looked around him, and fixed his eyes on a convent of monks of Saint Bridget, near Augsburg, celebrated for their piety and their profound and liberal studies. Feeling the need of repose, of leisure, of study, and of prayer, he turned towards these friars, and inquired: "Can I live among you according to the Word of God?" The latter having replied in the affirmative, Oecolampadius entered the monastery on the 23rd of April 1520, with the express condition that he should be free, if ever the service of God's Word should call him elsewhere.

It was well that the future reformer of Basle should, like Luther, become acquainted with that monastic life which is the highest expression of Roman Catholicism. But here he found no repose; his friends blamed the step; and he himself openly declared that Luther was nearer the truth than his adversaries. Accordingly, Eck and the other Romish doctors pursued him with their menaces, even in his calm retreat.

At this time, Oecolampadius was neither reformed nor a follower of Rome; he desired a certain purified Catholicism, which is nowhere to be found in history, but the idea of which has often bridged the way to many minds. He began to correct the rules of his order in conformity with the Word of God. "Do not, I beseech you," said he to his brethren, "set a higher value upon your statutes than on the ordinances of God!"—"We desire no other law," replied the brothers, "than that of our Saviour. Take our books, and mark, as if in the presence of Christ himself, whatever you find contrary to His Word." Oecolampadius applied himself to the task, but was almost wearied by the labour. "O Almighty God!" exclaimed he, "what abominations has not Rome approved of in these statutes!"

As soon as he pointed out some of them, the anger of the monks [412] was aroused. "Heretic!" exclaimed they, "apostate! you deserve to be thrown into a dungeon for the rest of your days!" They excluded him from public prayers. But the danger from without was still greater. Eck and his party had not relinquished their projects. "In three days," he was told, "they will be here to arrest you." He went to the brethren and said, "Will you give me up to assassins?" The monks were silent and undetermined; they neither wished to save nor destroy him. At this moment some friends of Oecolampadius arrived near the cloister with horses to carry him to a place of safety. On being informed of this, the monks resolved to allow the departure of a brother who had brought trouble into their convent. "Farewell," said he, and was free. He had remained nearly two years in the cloister of Saint Bridget.

Oecolampadius was saved; at last he began to breathe. "I have sacrificed the monk," wrote he to a friend, "and have regained the Christian." But his flight from the convent and his heretical writings were known everywhere, and everywhere people shrunk back at his approach. He knew not what would become of him, when, in the spring of 1522, Sickingen offered him an asylum, which he accepted.

His mind, oppressed by monastic servitude, took a new flight in the midst of the noble warriors of Ebernburg. "Christ is our liberty," exclaimed he, "and death, which men consider their greatest misfortune, is a real gain to us." He directly began reading the Gospels and Epistles in German to the people. "As soon as these trumpets sound," said he, "the walls of Jericho will fall down."

Thus, in a fortress on the banks of the Rhine, and in the midst of illiterate warriors, the most humble man of his age was preparing for that change of worship which Christianity was shortly to undergo. But Ebernburg was too confined for him, and he felt the need of other society than these armed men. The bookseller Cratander invited him to Basle; Sickingen allowed him to depart, and Oecolampadius, delighted at the thought of seeing his old friends again, arrived in that city on the 16th of November 1522. After having lived there Sometime, simply as a man of learning without any public occupation, he was nominated curate of Saint Martin's church, and it was this call to an humble and obscure employment that possibly decided the Reformation of Basle. An immense crowd filled the church whenever Oecolampadius went into the pulpit. At the same time the public lectures delivered by himself and Pellican were crowned with such success that even Erasmus was forced to exclaim, "Oecolampadius triumphs."

In effect, this mild yet firm man (says Zwingle) spread around him the sweet savour of Christ, and all those who crowded about him grew in truth. Often, indeed, a rumour was circulated that he would be forced to leave Basle and recommence his perilous pilgrimage. His friends, Zwingle in particular, were alarmed; but erelong the tidings of fresh victories gained by Oecolampadius scattered their fears and raised their hopes. The renown of his lectures extended even to Wittenberg, and delighted Luther, who talked with Melancthon about him every day. And yet the Saxon reformer was not without anxiety. Erasmus was at Basle, and Erasmus was the friend of Oecolampadius Luther thought it his duty to put the man whom he loved on his guard. "I much fear," wrote he, "that Erasmus, like Moses, will die in the country of Moab, and never lead us into the land of promise."

Erasmus had taken refuge at Basle, as in a quiet city, lying in the centre of the literary movement, and from the bosom of which he could, by means of the press of

Frobenius, act upon France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and England. But he did not like men to come and trouble him there; and if he looked upon Oecolampadius with suspicion, another man inspired him with still greater apprehension. Ulrich Hutten had followed Oecolampadius to Basle. For a long while he had been attacking the pope, as one knight engages with another. "The axe," said he, "is already laid at the root of the tree. Germans! faint not in the heat of the battle; the die is cast; the work is begun Liberty for ever!" He had abandoned Latin, and now wrote only in German; for it was the people he wished to address.

His views were noble and generous. It was his idea that there should be an annual meeting of the bishops to regulate the interests of the Church. A christian constitution, and above all a christian spirit, was to go forth from Germany, as from Judea in other times, and spread through the whole world. Charles V was to be the youthful hero appointed to realise this golden age; but Hutten, having seen the failure of his hopes in this quarter, had turned towards Sickingen, and sought from knighthood what the empire had refused him. Sickingen, at the head of the feudal nobility, had played a distinguished part in Germany; but the princes had besieged him in his castle of Landstein, and the new invention of cannons had crushed those aged walls, [413] accustomed to other attacks. The taking of Landstein had proved the final defeat of chivalry,—the decisive victory of artillery over shields and lances,—the triumph of modern times over the middle ages.

Thus the last exploit of the knights was destined to be in favour of the Reformation; the first effort of these new arms and system of warfare was to be against it. The mailed warriors that fell beneath the unlooked for storm of balls, and lay among the ruins of Landstein, gave way to other soldiers. Other conflicts were about to begin; a spiritual chivalry succeeded to that of the Du Guesclins and Bayards. And those old and ruined battlements, those battered walls, these dying heroes, proclaimed with greater energy than even Luther could have done, that not by such allies or such arms would the Gospel of the Prince of peace obtain the victory.

The fall of Landstein and of chivalry had blasted all Hutten's hopes. Standing beside the corpse of Sickingen, he bade farewell to those brighter days which his imagination had conjured up before him, and losing all confidence in man, he sought only for seclusion and repose. In search of these he visited Erasmus in Switzerland. These two men had long been friends; but the unpolished and turbulent knight, braving the opinions of others, ever ready to lay his hand upon the sword, dealing his blows right and left on all whom he met, could scarcely live in harmony with the squeamish and timid Dutchman, with his refined manners, his mild and polished language, his love of approbation, and his readiness to sacrifice everything for its

sake, and fearing nothing in the world so much as a dispute. On arriving at Basle, Hutten, poor, sick, and a fugitive, immediately inquired for his old friend. But Erasmus trembled at the thought of receiving at his table a person under the ban of the pope and the emperor, who would spare no one, who would borrow money of him, and would no doubt be dragging after him a crowd of those "Gospellers" whom Erasmus dreaded more and more. He refused to see him, and shortly after, the magistrates of Basle desired Hutten to leave the city. Wounded to the quick, and exasperated against his timid friend, Hutten repaired to Mulhausen, and there published a violent pamphlet against Erasmus, to which the latter replied in a paper overflowing with wit. The knight had grasped his sword with both hands, and aimed a crushing blow at his antagonist; the scholar, adroitly stepping aside, pecked the soldier smartly in return.

Hutten was again compelled to flee; he reached Zurich, and there met with a generous reception from the noble-hearted Zwingle. But intrigues again compelled him to leave that city; and after passing Sometime at the baths of Pfeffers, he repaired with a letter from the Swiss reformer to the pastor of John Schnepp, who inhabited the small island of Ufnau in the lake of Zurich. This poor minister entertained the sick and fugitive knight with the most touching charity. It was in this peaceful and obscure retreat that Ulrich Hutten, one of the most remarkable men of the sixteenth century, died obscurely about the end of August 1523, after a most agitated life, expelled by one party, persecuted by another, deserted by nearly all, and having always contended against superstition, but, as it would seem, without having ever possessed the truth. The poor pastor, who had some skill in the healing art, had vainly lavished on him all his cares. With him chivalry expired. He left neither money, nor furniture, nor books;—nothing in the world but a pen. Thus was broken the arm of iron that had presumed to support the ark of God.

CHAPTER 9

Erasmus and Luther—Vacillations of Erasmus—Luther to Erasmus—Erasmus's Treatise against Luther on Free Will—Three Opinions—Effect upon Luther—Luther on Free Will—The Jansenists and the Reformers—Homage to Erasmus—His Anger—The Three Days

There was in Germany a man more formidable to Erasmus than the ill-fated Hutten: this was Luther. The moment had now arrived when these two great champions of the age were to measure their strength hand to hand. The two reformations at which they arrived were very different. While Luther desired a thorough reform, Erasmus, a friend to half-measures, was endeavouring to obtain concessions from the hierarchy that would unite the extreme parties. The vacillations and inconsistency of Erasmus disgusted Luther. "You desire to walk upon eggs without crushing them," said the latter, "and among glasses without breaking them."

At the same time he met the vacillations of Erasmus with absolute decision. "We Christians," said he, "ought to be sure of our doctrine, and able to say yes or no without hesitation. To presume to hinder us from affirming our belief with full conviction, is depriving us of faith itself. The Holy Ghost is no sceptic; and He has written in our hearts a firm and strong assurance, which makes us as certain of our [414] faith as we are of life itself."

These words alone suffice to show us on which side strength was to be found. To accomplish a religious transformation, there is need of a firm and living faith. A salutary revolution in the Church will never proceed from philosophical views and mere human opinions. To fertilise the earth after a long drought, the lightning must cleave the cloud and the windows of heaven must be opened. Criticism, philosophy, and even history may prepare the way for the true faith, but cannot supply its place. In vain would you clear the watercourses and repair the dikes, so long as the rain does not come down from heaven. All human learning without faith is but an aqueduct without water.

Whatever might have been the essential difference between Luther and Erasmus, the friends of Luther, and even the reformer himself, had long hoped to see Erasmus unite with them against Rome. Many sayings which his caustic humor let fall were quoted, as showing his disagreement with the most zealous defenders of Romanism. One day, for instance, when he was in England, he had a keen discussion with Thomas More on transubstantiation: "Believe that you have the body of Christ," said the latter, "and you have it really." Erasmus made no reply. Shortly after, when

leaving England, More lent him a horse to carry him to the seaside; but Erasmus took it with him to the Continent. As soon as More was informed of this, he wrote very severely to him about it. Erasmus, by way of reply, sent him these lines:—"You said of the bodily presence of Christ: Believe that you have, and you have him! Of the nag that I took my reply is the same: Believe that you have, and you have him!"

It was not only in England and Germany that Erasmus had thus become known. It was said at Paris that Luther had only opened the door, after Erasmus had picked the lock. The position taken by Erasmus was by no means easy: "I shall not be unfaithful to the cause of Christ," wrote he to Zwingle, "at least so far as the age will permit me." In proportion as he beheld Rome rising up against the friends of the Reformation, he prudently retreated. He was applied to from all quarters; the pope, the emperor, kings, princes, scholars, and even his most intimate friends, entreated him to write against the reformer. "No work," wrote the pope, "can be more acceptable to God, and worthier of yourself and of your genius."

Erasmus long resisted these solicitations; he could not conceal from himself that the cause of the reformers was the cause of religion as well as of letters. Besides, Luther was an adversary with whom every one feared to try his strength, and Erasmus already imagined he felt the quick and vigorous blows of the Wittenberg champion. "It is very easy to say, Write against Luther," replied he to a Romish theologian; "but it is a matter full of peril." Thus he would—and yet he would not.

This irresolution on the part of Erasmus drew on him the attacks of the most violent men of both parties. Luther himself knew not how to reconcile the respect he felt for Erasmus's learning with the indignation he felt at his timidity. Resolving to free himself from so painful a dilemma, he wrote him a letter in April 1524, which he intrusted to Camerarius. "You have not yet received from the Lord," said Luther, "the courage necessary to walk with us against the papists. We put up with your weakness. If learning flourishes: if by its means the treasures of Scripture are opened to all; this is a gift which God has bestowed on us through you; a noble gift, and for which our thanksgivings ascend to heaven! But do not forsake the task that has been imposed on you, and pass over our camp. No doubt your eloquence and genius might be very useful to us; but since you are wanting in courage, remain where you are. I could wish that our people would allow your old age to fall asleep peacefully in the Lord. The greatness of our cause has long since gone beyond your strength. But on the other hand, my dear Erasmus, refrain from scattering over us with such profusion that pungent salt which you know so well how to conceal under the flowers of rhetoric; for it is more dangerous to be slightly wounded by Erasmus than to be ground to powder

by all the papists put together. Be satisfied to remain a spectator of our tragedy; and publish no books against me; and for my part, I will write none against you."

Thus did Luther, the man of strife, ask for peace; it was Erasmus, the man of peace, who began the conflict. Erasmus received this communication from the reformer as the bitterest of insults; and if he had not yet determined to write against Luther, he probably did so then. "It is possible," he replied, "that Erasmus by writing against you will be of more service to the Gospel than certain dunces who write for you, and who do not permit him to be a simple spectator of this tragedy."

But he had other motives besides.[415] Henry VIII of England, and the nobility of that kingdom, earnestly pressed him to declare himself openly against the Reformation. Erasmus, in a moment of courage, suffered the promise to be wrung from him. His equivocal position had become a source of constant trouble to him; he loved repose, and the necessity he felt of continually justifying his conduct disturbed his existence; he was fond of glory, and already men were accusing him of fearing Luther, and of being too weak to answer him; he was accustomed to be highest seat, and the little monk of Wittenberg had dethroned the mighty philosopher of Rotterdam. He must then, by some bold step, recover the position he had lost. All Christendom that adhered to the old worship implored him to do so. A capacious genius and the greatest reputation of the age were wanted to oppose the Reformation. Erasmus answered the call.

But what weapons will he employ? Will he hurl the thunders of the Vatican? Will he defend the abuses that disgrace the papacy? Erasmus could not act thus. The great movement that agitated men's minds after the lethargy of so many centuries filled him with joy, and he would have feared to trammel it. Unable to be the champion of Romanism in what it has added to Christianity, he undertook to defend it in what it had taken away. It attacking Luther, Erasmus selected the point where Romanism is lost in Rationalism,—the doctrine of free will, or the natural power of man. Thus, while undertaking the defense of the Church, Erasmus gratified the men of the world, and while battling for the popes, he contended also on behalf of the philosophers. It has been said that he had injudiciously confined himself to an obscure and unprofitable question. Luther, the reformers, and their age, judged very differently; and we agree with them. "I must acknowledge," said Luther, "that in this controversy you are the only man that has gone to the root of the matter. I thank you for it with all my heart; for I would rather be occupied with this subject than with all those secondary questions about the pope, purgatory, and indulgences, with which the enemies of the Gospel have hitherto pestered me."

His own experience and an attentive study of the Holy Scriptures, and of St. Augustine, had convinced Luther that the natural powers of man are so inclined to evil, that he cannot, of himself, reach any farther than a certain outward rectitude, altogether insufficient in the eyes of the Deity. He had at the same time recognised that it was God who gives true righteousness, by carrying on freely the work of faith in man by his Holy Spirit. This doctrine had become the mainspring of his religion, the predominant idea in his theology, and the point on which the whole Reformation turned.

While Luther maintained that every good thing in man came down from God, Erasmus sided with those who thought that this good proceeded from man himself. God or man,—good or evil,— these are certainly no paltry questions; and if "trivialities" exist, they must be looked for elsewhere.

It was in the autumn of 1524 that Erasmus published his famous treatise entitled Dissertation on the Freedom of the Will; and it had no sooner appeared, than the philosopher could hardly believe his own boldness. With eyes fixed on the arena, he looked tremblingly at the gauntlet he had flung to his adversary. "The die is cast," wrote he with emotion to Henry VIII; "the book on free will has appeared.— Trust me, this is a daring act. I expect I shall be stoned for it.—But I console myself by the example of your majesty, whom the rage of these people has not spared."

His alarm soon increased to such a degree that he bitterly regretted the step he had taken. "Why was I not permitted to grow old in the garden of the Muses?" exclaimed he. "Here am I, at sixty, driven into the arena, and holding the cestus and the net of the gladiator, instead of the lyre!—I am aware," wrote he to the Bishop of Rochester, "that in writing upon free will, I have gone beyond my sphere You congratulate me upon my triumphs! Ah! I know not that I triumph. The faction (i.e. the Reformation) is spreading daily. Was it then fated, that at my time of life I should be transformed from a friend of the Muses into a wretched gladiator!" It was no doubt an important matter for the timid Erasmus to have risen up against Luther; he was, however, far from showing any very great boldness. In his book he seems to ascribe but little to man's will, and to leave the greater portion to Divine grace; but at the same time he chose his arguments in a manner to make it be believed that man does everything, and God nothing. Not daring openly to express his thoughts, he affirms one thing and proves another; and hence we may be allowed to suppose that he believed what he proved and not what he affirmed.

He distinguishes three several opinions, opposed in three different degrees to Pelagianism. "Some think," said he, "that man can neither will, nor commence, and

still less perform, any good work, without the special and continual aid of Divine grace; and this opinion seems probable enough. Others teach that man's will is powerless except for evil, and that it is grace alone which works in us any good; and finally, there are some who assert that there has never been any free will either in angels, or in Adam, or in us, either before or after grace, but that God works in man both good and evil, and that everything happens from an absolute necessity."

Erasmus, while seeming to admit the former of these opinions, makes use of arguments that confute it, and which the most decided Pelagian might employ. In this manner, quoting the passages of Scripture in which God offers man the choice between good and evil, he adds: "Man must therefore have the power to will and to choose; for it would be ridiculous to say to any one, Choose! when it was not in his power to do so."

Luther did not fear Erasmus. "Truth," said he, "is mightier than eloquence. The victory remains with him who lisps out the truth, and not with him who puts forth a lie in flowing language." But when he received Erasmus's treatise in the month of October 1524, he found it so weak that he hesitated to reply to it. "What! so much eloquence in so bad a cause!" said he; "it is as if a man were to serve up mud and dung on dishes of silver and gold. One cannot lay hold of you. You are like an eel that slips through the fingers; or like the fabulous Proteus who changed his form in the very arms of those who wished to grasp him."

But as Luther did not reply, the monks and scholastic divines began to utter shouts of victory: "Well, where is your Luther now? Where is the great Maccabeus? Let him come down into the lists! let him come forth! Ah, ah! he has met his match at last! He has learnt now to remain in the back-ground; he has found out how to hold his tongue."

Luther saw that he must write an answer; but it was not until the end of the year 1525 that he prepared to do so; and Melancthon having informed Erasmus that Luther would be moderate, the philosopher was greatly alarmed. "If I have written with moderation," said he, "it is my disposition; but Luther possesses the wrath of Peleus' son (Achilles). And how can it be otherwise? When a vessel braves a storm such as that which has burst upon Luther, what anchor, what ballast, what helm does it not require to prevent it from being driven out of its course! If therefore he replies to me in a manner not in accordance with his character, these sycophants will cry out that we are in collusion." We shall see that Erasmus was soon relieved of this apprehension.

The doctrine of God's election as the sole cause of man's salvation had always been dear to the reformer; but hitherto he had considered it in a practical light only. In his reply to Erasmus, he investigated it particularly in a speculative point of view, and endeavoured to establish by such arguments as appeared to him most conclusive, that God works everything in man's conversion, and that our hearts are so alienated from the love of God that they cannot have a sincere desire for righteousness, except by the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit.

"To call our will a free will," said he, "is to imitate those princes who accumulate long titles, styling themselves lords of sundry kingdoms, principalities, and distant islands (of Rhodes, Cyprus, and Jerusalem, &c.), while they have not the least power over them." Here, however, Luther makes an important distinction, clearly showing that he by no means participated in the third opinion that Erasmus had pointed out and imputed to him. "Man's will may be called a free will, not in relation to that which is above him, that is to say, to God; but with respect to that which is below, that is, to the things of the earth. As regards my property, my fields, my house, my farm, I can act, do, and manage freely. But in the things of salvation, man is a captive; he is subjected to the will of God, or rather of the devil. Show me but one of all these advocates of free will (he exclaims) that has found in himself sufficient strength to endure a trifling injury, a fit of anger, or merely a look from his enemy, and bear it with joy; then—without even asking him to be ready to give up his body, his life, his wealth, his honour, and all things—I acknowledge you have gained your cause."

Luther's glance was too penetrating not to discover the contradictions into which his opponent had fallen. And accordingly, in his reply he endeavours to fasten the philosopher in the net in which he had entangled himself. "If the passages you quote," said he, "establish that it is easy for us to do good, why do we dispute? What need have we of Christ and of the Holy Ghost? Christ would then have acted foolishly in shedding his blood to acquire for us a power that we already possessed by nature." In truth, the passages cited by Erasmus must be taken in quite a different sense. This much debated question is clearer than it appears to be at first sight. When the Bible says to man, Choose, it presupposes the assistance of God's grace, by which alone he can do what it commands. God, in giving the commandment, also gives the strength to fulfil it. If Christ said to Lazarus, Come forth, it was not that Lazarus had power to restore himself; but that Christ, by commanding him to leave the sepulchre, gave him also the strength to do so, and accompanied His words with His creative power. He spoke, and it was done. Moreover, it is very true that the man to whom God speaks must will; it is he who wills, and not another; he can receive this will but from God alone; but it is in him that this will must be, and the very commandment that God addresses to him, and which, according to Erasmus, establishes the ability of man, is

so reconcilable with the workings of God, that it is precisely by these means that the working is effected. It is by saying to the man "Be converted," that God converts him.

But the idea on which Luther principally dwelt in his reply is, that the passages quoted by Erasmus are intended to teach men their duty, and their inability to perform it, but in no way to make known to them the pretended power ascribed to them. "How frequently it happens," says Luther, "a father calls his feeble child to him, and says: 'Will you come, my son! come then, come!' in order that the child may learn to call for his assistance, and allow himself to be carried."

After combating Erasmus's arguments in favour of free will, Luther defends his own against the attacks of his opponent. "Dear Dissertation," says he ironically, "mighty heroine, who pridest thyself in having overthrown these words of our Lord in St. John: Without me ye can do nothing, which thou regardest nevertheless as the prop of my argument, and callest it Luther's Achilles, listen to me. Unless thou canst prove that this word nothing, not only may but must signify little, all thy high-sounding phrases, thy splendid examples, have no more effect than if a man were to attempt to quench an immense fire with a handful of straw. What are such assertions as these to us: This may mean; that may be understood whilst it was thy duty to show us that is must be so understood Unless thou doest so, we take this declaration in its literal meaning, and laugh at all thy examples, thy great preparations, and thy pompous triumphs."

Finally, in a concluding part, Luther shows, and always from Scripture, that the grace of God does everything. "In short," says he at the end, "since Scripture everywhere contrasts Christ with that which has not the spirit of Christ; since it declares that all which is not Christ and in Christ is under the power of error, darkness, the devil, death, sin, and the wrath of God, it follows that all these passages of the Bible that speak of Christ are opposed to free will. Now such passages are numberless; the Holy Scriptures are full of them."

We perceive that the discussion which arose between Luther and Erasmus is the same as that which a century after took place between the Jansenists and Jesuits, between Pascal and Molina. How is it that, while the results of the Reformation were so immense, Jansenism, though adorned by the noblest geniuses, wasted and died away? It is because Jansenism went back to Augustine and relied on the Fathers; while the Reformation went back to the Bible and leant upon the Word of God. It is because Jansenism entered into a compromise with Rome, and wished to establish a middle course between truth and error, while the Reformation, relying upon God alone, cleared the soil, swept away all the rubbish of past ages, and laid bare the

primitive rock. To stop half way is a useless work; in all things we should persevere to the end. Accordingly, while Jansenism has passed away, the destinies of the world are bound up with evangelical Christianity.

Further, after having keenly refuted error, Luther paid a brilliant but perhaps a somewhat sarcastic homage to Erasmus himself. "I confess," said he, "that you are a great man; where have we ever met with more learning, intelligence, or ability, both in speaking and writing? As for me, I possess nothing of the kind; there is only one thing from which I can derive any glory,—I am a Christian. May God raise you infinitely above me in the knowledge of the Gospel, so that you may surpass me as much in this respect as you do already in every other."

Erasmus was beside himself when he read Luther's reply; and would see nothing in his encomiums but the honey of a poisoned cup, or the embrace of a serpent at the moment he darts his envenomed sting. He immediately wrote to the Elector of Saxony, demanding justice; and Luther having desired to appease him, he lost his usual temper, and, in the words of one of his most zealous apologists, began "to pour forth invectives with a broken voice and hoary hair." Erasmus was vanquished. Hitherto, moderation had been his strength,—and he had lost it. Passion was his only weapon against Luther's energy. The wise man was wanting in wisdom. He replied publicly in his Hyperaspistes, accusing the reformer of barbarism, lying, and blasphemy. The philosopher even ventured on prophesying. "I prophesy," said he, "that no name under the sun will be held in greater execration than Luther's." The jubilee of 1817 has replied to this prophecy, after a lapse of three hundred years, by the enthusiasm and acclamations of the whole Protestant world.

Thus, while Luther with the Bible was setting himself at the [418] head of his age, Erasmus, standing up against him, wished to occupy the same place with philosophy. Which of these two leaders has been followed? Both undoubtedly. Nevertheless Luther's influence on the nations of Christendom has been infinitely greater than that of Erasmus. Even those who did not thoroughly understand the grounds of the dispute, seeing the conviction of one antagonist and the doubts of the other, could not refrain from believing that the first was right and the second wrong. It has been said that the three last centuries, the sixteenth, the seventeenth, and the eighteenth, may be conceived as an immense battle of three days' duration. We willingly adopt this beautiful comparison, but not the part that is assigned to each of the days. The same struggle has been ascribed to the sixteenth and to the eighteenth century.

On the first day, as on the last, it is philosophy that breaks the ranks. The sixteenth century philosophical! Strange error! No: each of these days has its marked and distinct character. On the first day of the conflict, it was the Word of God, the Gospel of Christ, that triumphed; and then Rome was defeated, as well as human philosophy, in the person of Erasmus and her other representatives. On the second day, we grant that Rome, her authority, her discipline, her doctrine, reappeared and were about to triumph by the intrigues of a celebrated society and the power of the scaffold, aided by men of noble character and sublime genius. On the third day, human philosophy arose in all its pride, and finding on the field of battle, not the Gospel, but Rome, made short work, and soon carried every intrenchment. The first day was the battle of God, the second the battle of the priest, the third the battle of reason. What will be the fourth? In our opinion, the confused strife, the deadly contest of all these powers together, to end in the victory of Him to whom triumph belongs.

CHAPTER 10

The Three Adversaries—Source of Truth—Grebel—The Fanatics and Zwingle—Constitution of the Church—Prison—The Prophet Blaurock—Fanaticism at Saint Gall—Schucker and Family—Discussion at Zurich—The Limits of the Reformation—Punishment of the Fanatics

But the battle fought by the Reformation in the great day of the sixteenth century, under the standard of the Word of God, was not one and single, but manifold. The Reformation had many enemies to contend with at once; and after having first protested against the decretals and the supremacy of the pope, and then against the cold apophthegms of the rationalists, philosophers, or schoolmen, it had equally to struggle with the reveries of enthusiasm and the hallucinations of mysticism; opposing alike to these three powers the shield and the sword of Divine revelation.

It must be admitted that there is a great similarity, a striking unity, between these three powerful adversaries. The false systems that in every age have been the most opposed to evangelical Christianity, have always been distinguished by their making religious knowledge proceed from within the man himself. Rationalism makes it proceed from reason; mysticism from certain inner lights; and Romanism from an illumination of the pope. These three errors look for truth in man: evangelical Christianity looks for it wholly in God; and while mysticism, rationalism, and Romanism, admit a permanent inspiration in certain of our fellow-men, and thus open a door to every extravagance and diversity, evangelical Christianity recognises this inspiration solely in the writings of the apostles and prophets, and alone presents that great, beautiful, and living unity which is ever the same in all ages.

The task of the Reformation has been to re-establish the rights of the Word of God, in opposition not only to Romanism, but also to mysticism and rationalism. The fanaticism, which had been extinguished in Germany by Luther's return to Wittenberg, reappeared in full vigor in Switzerland, and threatened the edifice that Zwingle, Haller, and Oecolampadius had built on the Word of God. Thomas Munzer, having been forced to quit Saxony in 1521, had reached the frontiers of Switzerland. Conrad Grebel, whose restless and ardent disposition we have already noticed, had become connected with him, as had also Felix Manz, a canon's son, and several other Zurichers; and Grebel had immediately endeavoured to gain over Zwingle. In vain had the latter gone farther than Luther; he saw a party springing up which desired to proceed farther still. "Let us form a community to true believers," said Grebel to him; "for to them alone the promise belongs, and let us found a church in which there

shall be no sin."—"We cannot make a heaven upon earth," replied Zwingle; "and Christ has taught us that we must let the tares grow up along with the wheat."

Grebel having failed with the reformer, would have desired to appeal to the people. "The whole community of Zurich," said he, "ought to have the final decision in matters of faith." But Zwingle feared the influence these radical enthusiasts might exercise over a large assembly. He thought that, except on extraordinary occasions when the people might be called upon to express their accordance, [419] it was better to confide the interests of religion to a college, which might be considered the chosen representatives of the Church. Accordingly the Council of Two Hundred, which exercised the supreme political authority in Zurich, was also intrusted with the ecclesiastical power, on the express condition that they should conform in all things to the Holy Scriptures.

No doubt it would have been better to have thoroughly organised the Church, and called on it to appoint its own representatives, who should be intrusted solely with the religious interests of the people; for a man may be very capable of administering the interests of the State, and yet very unskillful in those of the Church; just as the reverse of this is true also. Nevertheless the inconvenience was not then so serious as it would have been in these days, since the members of the Great Council had frankly entered into the religious movement. But, however this may be, Zwingle, while appealing to the Church, was careful not to make it too prominent, and preferred the representative system to the actual sovereignty of the people. This is what, after three centuries, the states of Europe have been doing in the political world for the last fifty years.

Being rejected by Zwingle, Grebel turned to another quarter. Rubli, formerly pastor at Basle, Brodtlein, pastor at Zollikon, and Louis Herzer, received him with eagerness. They resolved to form an independent congregation in the midst of the great congregation, a Church within the Church. The baptism of adult believers only, was to be their means of assembling their congregation. "Infant baptism," said they, "is a horrible abomination, a flagrant impiety, invented by the wicked spirit, and by Nicholas II, pope of Rome."

The council of Zurich was alarmed, and ordered a public discussion to be held; and as they still refused to abjure their opinions, some of the Zurichers among their number were thrown into prison, and several foreigners were banished. But persecution only inflamed their zeal: "Not by words alone," cried they, "but with our blood, we are ready to bear testimony to the truth of our cause." Some of them, girding themselves with cords or ozier twigs, ran through the streets, exclaiming: "Yet a few

days, and Zurich will be destroyed! Woe to thee, Zurich! Woe! woe!" The simple-minded and pious were agitated and alarmed. Fourteen men, among whom was Felix Mantz, and seven women, were apprehended, in despite of Zwingle's intercession, and put on bread and water in the heretic's tower. After being confined a fortnight, they managed to loosen some planks in the night, and aiding one another, effected their escape. "An angel," said they, "had opened the prison and led them forth."

A monk, who had escaped from his convent, George Jacob of Coire, surnamed Blaurock, as it would seem, from the blue dress he constantly wore, joined their sect, and from his eloquence was denominated a second Paul. This daring monk travelled from place to place, constraining many, by his imposing fervour, to receive his baptism. One Sunday, when at Zollikon, the impetuous monk interrupted the deacon as he was preaching, calling out in a voice of thunder: "It is written, My house is a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." Then raising the staff he carried in his hand, he struck four violent blows.

"I am a door," exclaimed he; "whosoever entereth by me shall find pasture. I am a good shepherd. My body I give to the prison; my life I give to the sword, the stake, or the wheel. I am the beginning of the baptism and of the bread of the Lord."

While Zwingle was opposing this torrent in Zurich, Saint Gall was soon inundated with it. Grebel arrived there, and was received by the brethren with acclamations; and on Palm Sunday he proceeded to the banks of the Sitter with a great number of his adherents, whom he there baptised. The news quickly spread through the adjoining cantons, and a great crowd flocked from Zurich, Appenzel, and several other places to the "Little Jerusalem."

Zwingle's heart was wrung at the sight of this agitation. He saw a storm bursting on these districts where the seed of the Gospel was just beginning to spring up. Resolving to oppose these sentiments on baptism, he wrote a treatise on that subject, which the council of St. Gall, to whom it was addressed, ordered to be read in the church before all the people.

"My dear brethren in the Lord," said Zwingle, "the water of the torrents that issue from our rocks carries with it everything within its reach. At first it is only small stones; but these dash violently against larger ones, until at last the torrent becomes so strong that it carries away all it meets, and leaves in its track wailing and vain regrets, and fertile meadows changed into a wilderness. The spirit of strife and self-righteousness acts in a similar manner: it excites discord, destroys charity, and where

it found beautiful and flourishing churches, leaves behind it nothing but flocks plunged [420] into mourning and desolation."

Thus spoke Zwingle, the child of the Tockenburg mountains. "Give us the Word of God," exclaimed one who was present in the church; "and not the word of Zwingle." Immediately confused voices were heart: "Away with the book! away with the book!" shouted the multitude. After this they rose and quitted the church, crying out: "You may keep the doctrine of Zwingle; as for us, we will keep the Word of God."

The fanaticism now broke forth into the most lamentable disorders. Maintaining that the Lord had exhorted us to become like children, these unhappy creatures began to clap their hands, and skip about in the streets, to dance in a ring, sit on the ground, and tumble each other about in the dust. Some burnt the New Testament,saying, "The letter killeth, the Spirit giveth life." Others, falling into convulsions, pretended to have revelations from the Holy Ghost.

In a solitary house on the Mullegg near St. Gaul, lived an aged farmer, John Schucker, with his five sons. They had all of them, including the domestics, received the new religion; and two of the sons, Thomas and Leonard, were distinguished for their fanaticism. On Shrove Tuesday (7th February 1526), they invited a large party to their house, and their father killed a calf for the feast. The viands, the wine, and this numerous assembly, heated their imaginations; the whole night was passed in fanatical conversation and gesticulations, convulsions, visions, and revelations.

In the morning, Thomas, still agitated by this night of disorder, and having, as it would seem, lost his reason, took the calf's bladder, and placing in it part of the gall, intending thus to imitate the symbolical language of the prophets, approached his brother Leonard, saying with a gloomy voice: "Thus bitter is the death thou art to suffer!" He then added: "Brother, Leonard, kneel down!" Leonard fell on his knees; shortly after, "Brother Leonard, arise!" Leonard stood up. The father, brothers, and others of the company looked on with astonishment, asking themselves what God would do. Thomas soon resumed: "Leonard, kneel down again!" He did so. The spectators, alarmed at the gloomy countenance of the wretched man, said to him: "Think of what you are about, and take care that no mischief happens."—"Fear not," replied Thomas, "nothing will happen but the will of the Father." At the same time he hastily caught up a sword, and striking a violent blow at his brother, kneeling before him as a criminal before the executioner, he cut off his head, exclaiming: "Now the will of the Father is accomplished." All the bystanders recoiled with horror at the deed; and the farm resounded with groans and lamentations. Thomas, who had nothing on but a shirt and trousers, rushed barefooted and bare headed out of the

house, ran to St. Gall with frenzied gestures, entered the house of the burgomaster Joachim Vadian, and said to him with haggard looks and wild cries: "I proclaim to thee the day of the Lord!" The frightful news soon spread through St. Gall. "He has slain his brother, as Cain slew Abel," said the people. The culprit was seized. "It is true I did it," he continually repeated; "but it is God who did it through me." On the 16th of February, this unhappy creature lost his head by the sword of the executioner. Fanaticism had made its last effort. Men's eyes were opened, and, according to an old historian, the same blow took off the head of Thomas Schucker and of fanaticism of St. Gall.

It still prevailed at Zurich. On the 6th of November in the preceding year, a public discussion on the subject of infant baptism had been held in the council hall, when Zwingle and his friends proposed the following theses:—

"Children born of believing parents are children of God, like those who were born under the Old Testament, and consequently may receive baptism.

"Baptism under the New Testament is what circumcision was under the Old; consequently, baptism ought now to be administered to children, as circumcision was formerly.

"We cannot prove the custom of re-baptising either by examples, texts, or arguments drawn from Scripture; and those who are rebaptised crucify Jesus Christ afresh."

But the dispute was not confined to religious questions; they called for the abolition of tithes, on the ground that they were not of Divine appointment. Zwingle replied, that the maintenance of the schools and churches depended on the tithes. He desired a complete religious reform; but was decided not to permit the public order or political institutions to be in the least degree shaken. This was the limit at which he perceived that word from heaven, written by the hand of God, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther." It was necessary to stop somewhere, and here Zwingle and the reformers halted, in spite of those headstrong men who endeavoured to hurry them farther still.

But if the reformers halted, they could not stop the enthusiasts, [421] who seemed placed at their sides as if in contrast with their discretion and prudence. It was not enough for them to have formed a church; this church in their eyes was the state. When they were summoned before the tribunals, they declared they did not recognise the civil authority, that it was only a remnant of paganism, and that they

would obey no other power than God. They taught that it was not lawful for Christians to fill public offices, or to carry the sword; and resembling in this respect certain irreligious enthusiasts that have sprung up in our days, they looked upon a community of goods as the perfection of humanity.

Thus the danger was increasing; the existence of civil society was threatened. It rose up to reject from its bosom these destructive elements. The government, in alarm, suffered itself to be hurried into strange measures. Being resolved to make an example, it condemned Mantz to be drowned. On the 5th of January 1527, he was placed in a boat; his mother (the aged concubine of the canon) and his brother were among the crowd that followed him to the water's edge. "Persevere unto the end," exclaimed they. When the executioner prepared to throw Mantz into the lake, his brother burst into tears; but his mother, calm and resolute, witnessed with dry and burning eyes the martyrdom of her son.

On the same day Blaurock was scourged with rods. As they were leading him outside of the city, he shook his blue cloak and the dust from off his feet against the city of Zurich. It would appear that two years later this unhappy creature was burnt alive by the Roman Catholics of the Tyrol.

Undoubtedly a spirit of rebellion existed; no doubt the old ecclesiastical law, condemning heretics to death, was still in force, and the Reformation could not in one or two years reform every error; and further, there is no question that the Romish states would have accused the Protestant states of encouraging disorder if they had not punished these enthusiasts; but these considerations may explain, although they cannot justify, the severity of the magistrates. They might have taken measures against everything that infringed the civil authority; but religious errors, being combated by the teachers, should have enjoyed complete liberty before the civil tribunals. Such opinions are not to be expelled be the scourge; they are not drowned by throwing their professors into the water; they float up again from the depth of the abyss; and fire but serves to kindle in their adherents a fiercer enthusiasm and thirst for martyrdom. Zwingle, with whose sentiments on this subject we are acquainted, took no part in these severities.

CHAPTER 11

Progression and Immobility—Zwingle and Luther—Luther's Return to Scholasticism—Respect for Tradition—Occam—Contrary Tendency in Zwingle—Beginning of the Controversy—Oecolampadius and the Swabian Syngramma—Strasburg mediates

It was not, however, on baptism alone that diversities were to prevail; more serious differences were to arise on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

The human mind, freed from the yoke that had pressed upon it for so many ages, made use of its liberty; and if Roman Catholicism has to fear the shoals of despotism, Protestantism is equally exposed to those of anarchy. Progression is the character of Protestantism, as immobility is that of Romanism.

Roman Catholicism, which possesses in the papacy a means of continually establishing new doctrines, appears at first sight, indeed, to contain a principle eminently favourable to variations. It has in truth largely availed itself of it, and from age to age we see Rome bringing forward or ratifying new doctrines. But its system once complete, Roman Catholicism has declared itself the champion of immobility. In this its safety lies; it resembles those buildings which tremble at the least motion, and from which nothing can be taken without bringing them wholly to the ground. Permit the Romish priests to marry, or aim a blow at the doctrine of transubstantiation, and the whole system is shaken, the whole edifice crumbles into dust.

It is not thus with evangelical Christianity. Its principle is much less favourable to variations, and much more so to progression and to life. In fact, on the one hand it recognises Scripture only as the source of truth, one and always the same, from the beginning of the Church to the end: how then should it vary as Popery has done? But, on the other hand, each Christian is to go and draw for himself from this fountain; and hence proceed action and liberty. Accordingly, evangelical Christianity, while it is the same in the nineteenth as in the sixteenth century, and as in the first, is in every age full of spontaneity and motion, and is now filling the world with its researches, its labours, bibles, missionaries, light, salvation, and life.

It is a great error to classify together and almost to confound evangelical Christianity with mysticism and rationalism, and to impute their irregularities to it. Motion is in the very nature of Christian Protestantism; it is directly opposed to immobility and lethargy; but it is the motion of health and life that characterizes it,

and not the aberrations of man deprived of reason, or the convulsions of disease. We shall see this characteristic manifested in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

Such a result might have been expected. This doctrine had been understood in very different manners in the former ages of the Church, and this diversity existed until the time when the doctrine of transubstantiation and the scholastic theology began simultaneously to rule over the middle ages. But when this dominion was shaken, the old diversities were destined to reappear.

Zwingle and Luther, who had each been developed separately, the one in Switzerland and the other in Saxony, were however one day to meet face to face. The same spirit, and in many respects the same character, animated both. Both alike were filled with love for the truth and hatred of injustice; both were naturally violent; and this violence was moderated in each by a sincere piety. But there was one feature in Zwingle's character destined to carry him farther than Luther. It was not only as a man that he loved liberty, but also as a republican and fellow-countryman of Tell. Accustomed to the decision of a free state, he did not permit himself to be stopped by those considerations before which Luther recoiled. He had moreover studied less profoundly the scholastic theology, and thus found his motions less fettered. Both were ardently attached to their own convictions; both resolved to defend them; and, little habituated to yield to the convictions of another, they were now to meet, like two proud war-horses, which, rushing through the contending ranks, suddenly encounter each other in the hottest of the strife.

A practical tendency predominated in the character of Zwingle and in the Reformation of which he was the author, and this tendency was directed to two great objects, simplicity of worship and sanctification of life. To harmonise the worship with the necessities of the mind, that seeks not external pomp but invisible things—this was Zwingle's first aim. The idea of the corporeal presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, the origin of so many ceremonies and superstitions of the Church, must therefore be abolished. But another desire of the Swiss reformer led to the same results. He found that the Roman doctrine of the eucharist, and even that of Luther, presupposed a certain magical influence prejudicial to sanctification; he feared lest Christians, imagining they received Jesus Christ in the consecrated bread, should henceforward less earnestly seek to be united to him by faith in the heart. "Faith," said he, "is not knowledge, opinion, imagination; it is a reality. It leads to a real union with Divine things." Thus, whatever Zwingle's adversaries may have asserted, it was not a leaning to rationalism, but a profoundly religious view, that led him to his peculiar doctrines.

But there was another element in Zwingle's convictions: he was subject to those historical influences which we must everywhere recognise in the annals of the Church as in that of the world. It has been long supposed that he was acquainted with the sentiments of Ratram, Wickliffe, and Peter Waldo; but we possess a much safer historical clue to the convictions of the Swiss reformer.

The two Netherlanders, Rhodius and Sagarus, whom we have seen arrive at Wittenberg, and there occasion the first difference between Luther and Carlstadt, had turned their steps towards Switzerland, carrying with them Wessel's manuscripts, and reached Basle, where Luther himself had commended them to Oecolampadius. The latter person, who was of timid character, finding that Luther did not approve of the opinions which these brethren from Holland were endeavouring to propagate, did not venture to declare his sentiments, and sent them to Zwingle. They arrived at Zurich in 1521, and having waited on the reformer, immediately turned the conversation on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

Rhodius and his friend did not at first make known their opinions, but after listening to Zwingle, they gave thanks to God for having delivered them from so great an error. They then presented the letterm from Cornelius Hoen, which Zwingle read, and published shortly after.
This letter had an incalculable influence on the destinies of the Reformation. Hoen, resting his arguments on Christ's words in the sixth Chapter of Saint John, said: "Christ gives himself to us by means of the bread: but let us distinguish between the bread we receive by the mouth, and Christ whom we receive by faith. Whoever thinks that he receives only what he takes into his mouth, does not discern the body of the Lord, and eats and drinks his own condemnation because by eating and drinking he bears testimony to the presence of Christ, whilst by his unbelief he remains far from Him."—At the same time the Netherlanders laid Wessel's theses before Zwingle. These writings made a deep impression on the reformer's mind.

The result of Zwingle's inquiries corresponded with his tendencies. By studying Scripture as a whole, which was his custom, and not in detached passages, and by having recourse to classical antiquity for the solution of the difficulties of language, he arrived at the conviction that the word is, employed in the formula of the institution of the Lord's Supper, ought to be taken (as Hoen said) in the meaning of signifies, and as early as 1523 he wrote to his friend Wittembach that the bread and wine are in the Eucharist what the water is in baptism. "It would be in vain," added he, "for us to plunge a man a thousand times in water, if he does not believe. Faith is the one thing needful."

It would appear, besides, that Zwingle had been prepared, indirectly at least, for these views by Erasmus. Melancthon says: "Zwingle confessed to me (at Marburg) that it was originally from the writings of Erasmus that he had derived his opinions on the Lord's Supper." In fact Erasmus wrote in 1526: "The sentiments of Oecolampadius would not displease me if the testimony of the Church were not against them. I do not see what an insensible body can do, or what utility would be derived from it, even if we could feel it; it is enough that spiritual grace be found in the symbols."

Luther at first set out, in appearance at least, from principles very similar to those of the Zurich doctor. It is not the sacrament that sanctifieth," said he, "but faith in the sacrament." But the extravagances of those whose mysticism spiritualised everything, led to a great change in his views. When he saw enthusiasts who pretended to a particular inspiration, breaking images, rejecting baptism, and denying the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, he was alarmed; he had a sort of prophetic presentiment of the dangers that would threaten the Church if this ultra-spiritual tendency should get the upperhand, and he accordingly threw himself into the very opposite course; like a pilot who, seeing his boat lean too much on one side and near foundering, throws himself on the other to restore the equilibrium.

From that time Luther attached a higher importance to the sacraments. He maintained that they were not only signs, by means of which Christians were outwardly distinguished, as Zwingle said, but testimonials of the Divine will, calculated to strengthen our faith. More than this, Christ, in his view, had determined to give believers a full assurance of their salvation, and in order to seal this promise in the most effectual manner, he had added his real body to the bread and wine. "Just as iron and fire," continued he, "which are nevertheless two distinct substances, are confounded together in a heated mass of iron so that in each of its parts there is at once iron and fire; in like manner, and with much greater reason, the glorified body of Christ is found in all the parts of the bread."

Thus at this period there seems to have been some return on the part of Luther towards the scholastic theology. In his doctrine of justification by faith he had entirely renounced it; but in that of the sacrament he abandoned one point only, transubstantiation, and preserved the other, the corporeal presence. He even went so far as to say, that he would rather receive the blood only with the pope, than the wine only with Zwingle.

Luther's great principle was never to depart from the doctrine and customs of the Church, except when the language of Scripture rendered it absolutely necessary.

"Where has Christ commanded us to elevate the host and exhibit it to the people?" Carlstadt had demanded.—"And where has Christ forbidden it?" was Luther's reply. In this answer lies the principle of the two Reformations. Ecclesiastical traditions were dear to the Saxon reformer. If he separated from them on several points, it was not until after terrible struggles, and because, above all, it was necessary to obey the Scriptures. But when the letter of the Word of God appeared in harmony with the tradition and usages of the Church, he adhered to it with immovable firmness. Now this was what happened in the question of the eucharist. He did not deny that the word is might be taken in the sense indicated by Zwingle. He acknowledged, for instance, that in the words, That rock was Christ, it must be so understood; but he denied that this word must have the same meaning in the institution of the Lord's Supper.

He found in one of the later schoolmen, Occam, whom he preferred to all others, an opinion which he embraced. Like Occam, he gave up the continually repeated miracle, by virtue of which, according to the Roman Church, the body and blood of Christ took the place of the bread and wine after every consecration by the priest; and with this doctor, he substituted a universal miracle, worked once for all,—that of the ubiquity and omnipresence of the body of Jesus Christ. "Christ," said he, "is present in the bread and wine, because he is present everywhere, and above all, wherever he wills to be."

The turn of Zwingle's mind was very different from Luther's. He was less inclined to preserve a certain union with the universal Church and to maintain his connection with the traditions of past ages. As a theologian, he looked at Scripture alone, and thence only would he receive his faith freely and immediately, without troubling himself about what others had thought before him. As a republican, he looked to his commune of Zurich. It was the idea of the present Church that engrossed his thoughts, and not that of the Church of former times. He clung particularly to these words of St. Paul: For we being many are one bread, and one body; and he saw in the Lord's Supper the sign of a spiritual communion between Christ and all Christians. "Whoever acts unworthily," said he, "is guilty towards the body of Christ of which he is a member." This thought had a great practical influence over men's minds; and the effects it produced in the lives of many confirmed Zwingle in it.

Thus Luther and Zwingle had insensibly separated from each other. It is probable however that peace might have subsisted longer between them, if the turbulent Carlstadt, who kept passing to and fro between Switzerland and Germany, had not inflamed these contrary opinions. A step taken with the view to maintain peace led to the explosion. The council of Zurich, desirous of preventing all

controversy, forbade the sale of Carlstadt's works. Zwingle, who disapproved of his violence, and blamed his mystical and obscure expressions, thought himself now called upon to defend his doctrine, both in the pulpit and before the council; and shortly after wrote a letter to Albert, pastor of Reutlingen, in which he said: "Whether or not Christ speaks of the sacrament in the sixth Chapter of St. John, it is very evident that he there inculcates a manner of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, in which there is nothing corporeal." He then proceeded to prove that the Lord's Supper, by reminding the faithful, according to Christ's intention, of his body which was broken for them, procured for them that spiritual eating which alone is truly salutary/

Yet Zwingle shrunk from a rupture with Luther; he trembled at the thought that these unhappy disputes might tear in pieces that new society which was then forming in the midst of fallen Christendom. But it was not so with Luther. He did not hesitate to class Zwingle with those enthusiasts against whom he had already broken so many lances. He did not reflect that if the images had been taken down at Zurich, it was done legally and by order of the public authority. Accustomed to the forms of the German principalities, he knew but little of the proceedings of the Swiss republics; and he inveighed against the grave divines of Helvetia, as he had done against the Munzers and Carlstadts.

Luther having published his Treatise against the Celestial Prophets, Zwingle no longer hesitated, and at nearly the same time he gave to the world his Letter to Albert, and his Commentary on True and False Religion, dedicated to Francis I. In this last he said: "Since Christ, in the sixth Chapter of St. John, ascribes to faith the power of imparting eternal life, and of uniting the believer to Him in the closest union, what need have we of more? Why should He afterwards have ascribed this virtue to His flesh, whilst He himself declares that His flesh profiteth nothing? The flesh of Christ, so far as it suffered death for us, is of incalculable utility, for it saves us from perdition; so far as it is eaten by us, it is of no use whatever."

The struggle began. Pomeranus, Luther's friend, rushed into the conflict, and attacked the evangelist of Zurich somewhat too contemptuously. Oecolampadius then began to blush at having so long combated his doubts, and at having preached doctrines that already began to waver in his mind. He took courage, and wrote from Basle to Zwingle: "The dogma of the real presence is the fortress and safeguard of their impiety. So long as they preserve this idol, no one can conquer them." He then entered into the lists, by publishing a book on the meaning of our Lord's words: This is my body.

The mere fact that Oecolampadius had joined the reformer of Zurich excited an immense sensation, not only in Basle but in all Germany. Luther was deeply affected by it. Brenz, Schnepff, and twelve other pastors of Swabia, to whom Oecolampadius had dedicated his book, and most of whom had been his pupils, experienced the keenest sorrow. "At this very moment when I am separating from him in a just cause," said Brenz, taking up the pen to reply to him, "I honour and admire him as much as it is possible for a man to do. The bonds of love are not broken between us because we are not of one opinion." He then published, conjointly with his friends, the famous Swabian Syngramma, in which he replied to Oecolampadius with firmness but with charity and respect. "If an emperor," said the authors, "give a wand to a judge, saying: 'Take; this is the power of judging;' the wand no doubt is a mere sign; but the words being added, the judge has not only the symbol but the power itself." The true members of the reformed churches may admit this illustration. The Syngramma was received with acclamations; its authors were looked upon as the champions of truth; many theologians, and even laymen, desirous of sharing in their glory, began to defend the doctrine attacked, and fell upon Oecolampadius.[425]

Strasburg then came forward to mediate between Switzerland and Germany. Capito and Bucer were the friends of peace, and question in debate was, in their opinion, of secondary consequence; they therefore placed themselves between the two parties, sent one of their colleagues, George Cassel, to Luther, and conjured him to beware of snapping the ties of fraternity which united him with the Swiss divines.

Nowhere did Luther's character shine forth more strikingly than in this controversy on the Lord's Supper. Never were more clearly displayed that firmness with which he clung to a conviction which he believed to be christian, his faithfulness in seeking for no other foundation than Scripture, the sagacity of his defense, his animated eloquence, and often overwhelming powers of argumentation. But never also were more clearly shown the obstinacy with which he adhered to his own opinions, the little attention he paid to the reasons of his opponents, and the uncharitable haste with which he ascribed their errors to the wickedness of their hearts, or to the wiles of the devil. "One or other of us," said he to the Strasburg mediator, "must be ministers of Satan—the Swiss or ourselves."

This was what Capito styled "the frenzies of the Saxon Orestes;" and these frenzies were followed by exhaustion. Luther's health was affected by them; one day he fainted in the arms of his wife and friends; he was a whole week as if in "death and hell."—"He had lost Jesus Christ," he said, "and was tossed to and fro by the tempests of despair. The world was passing away, and announcing by prodigies that the last day was at hand."

But the divisions among the friends of the Reformation were destined to have still more fatal consequences. The Romish theologians exulted, particularly in Switzerland, at being able to oppose Luther to Zwingle. And yet if, after three centuries, the recollection of these divisions should convey to evangelical Christians the precious fruits of unity in diversity, and of charity in liberty, they will not have been in vain. Even then, the reformers, by opposing one another, showed that they were not governed by a blind hatred against Rome, and that truth was the primary object of their inquiries. Herein we must acknowledge there is something generous; and conduct so disinterested did not fail to bear fruit, and to extort, even from enemies, a feeling of interest and esteem.

And further than this, we may here again recognise that sovereign hand which directs all things, and permits nothing without the wisest design. Luther, notwithstanding his opposition to the Papacy, was in an eminent degree conservative. Zwingle, on the contrary, was inclined to a radical reform. These two opposite tendencies were necessary. If Luther and his friends had stood alone at the time of the Reformation, the work would have been stopped too soon, and the reforming principle would not have accomplished its prescribed task. If, on the contrary, there had been only Zwingle, the thread would have been snapped too abruptly, and the Reformation would have been isolated from the ages that had gone before.

These two tendencies, which to a superficial observer might seem to have existed only to combat each other, were ordained to complete each other; and after a lapse of three centuries we can say that they have fulfilled their mission.

CHAPTER 12

The Tockenburg—An Assembly of the People—Reformation—The Grisons—Disputation at Ilantz—Results—Reformation at Zurich

Thus the Reformation had struggles to maintain in every quarter, and after having contended with the rationalist philosophy of Erasmus, and the fanaticism of some of the anabaptists, it had still to endure an intestine war. But its great conflict was always with popery; and the attack begun in the cities of the plain was now carried on among the most distant mountains.

The mountains of the Tockenburg had heard the sound of the Gospel, and three ecclesiastics were there persecuted by order of the bishop, as inclining to heresy. "Convince us by the Word of God," said Militus, Doring, and Farer, "and we will submit not only to the chapter, but even to the least of our brethren in Christ; otherwise we will obey no one, not even the mightiest among men."

This was truly the spirit of Zwingle and of the Reformation. A circumstance occurred shortly after that inflamed the minds of the inhabitants of these lofty valleys. A meeting of the people took place on Saint Catherine's day; the citizens were assembled, and two men of Schwytz, having come to the Tockenburg on business, were seated at one of the tables; they entered into conversation. "Ulrich Zwingle," said one of them, "is a heretic and a robber!" Steiger, the secretary of state, undertook Zwingle's defense. Their noise attracted the attention of the whole meeting. George Bruggmann, Zwingle's uncle, who was at an adjoining table, spring angrily from his seat, exclaiming: "Surely they are speaking of Master Ulrich!"

All the guests rose and followed him, fearing a brawl. As the tumult [426] kept increasing, the bailiff hastily assembled the council in the street, and prayed Bruggmann, for the sake of peace, to be content with saying to these men: "If you do not retract your words, it is you who are guilty of lying and thieving."—"Recollect what you have just said," replied the men of Schwytz; "be sure we shall remember them." They then mounted their horses, and galloped off on the road to Schwytz.

The government of Schwytz then addressed a threatening letter to the inhabitants of the Tockenburg, which spread dismay among them. "Be bold and fearless," wrote Zwingle to the council of his native place. "Be not concerned at the lies they utter against me! Any brawler can call me a heretic; but do you refrain from insults, disorders, debauchery, and mercenary wars; relieve the poor, protect those

who are oppressed, and whatever abuse may be heaped upon you, preserve an unshaken confidence in Almighty God."

Zwingle's exhortations produced the desired effect. The council still hesitated, but the people, meeting in their respective parishes, unanimously decreed that the mass should be abolished, and that they would be faithful to the Word of God.

The conquests were not less important in Rhaetia, which Salandronius had been compelled to leave, but where Commander was boldly proclaiming the Gospel. The enthusiasts, indeed, by preaching their fanatical doctrines in the Grisons, had at first done great mischief to the Reformation. The people were divided into three parties. Some had embraced the views of these new prophets, others, amazed and confounded, regarded this schism with anxiety; and lastly, the partisans of Rome were loud in their exultation.

A meeting was held at Ilantz, in the gray league, for a public disputation; the supporters of the papacy, on the one hand, the friends of the Reformation on the other, collected their forces. The bishop's vicar at first sought how to evade the combat. "These disputes lead to great expense," said he; "I am ready to lay down ten thousand florins in order to meet them; but I require the opposite party to do as much."—"If the bishop has ten thousand florins at his disposal," exclaimed the rough voice of a peasant in the crowd, "it is from us he has wrung them; to give as much more to these poor priests would be too bad."—"We are poor people with empty purses," said Comander, pastor of Coire; "we have hardly the means of buying food: where then can we find ten thousand florins?" Every one laughed at this expedient, and the business proceeded.

Among the spectators were Sebastian Hofmeister and James Amman of Zurich; they held in their hands the Holy Bible in Greek and Hebrew. The bishop's vicar desired that all strangers should be excluded. Hofmeister understood this to be directed against him. "We have come provided with a Greek and Hebrew Bible," said he, "in order that no violence may be done in any manner to Scripture. Yet sooner than prevent the conference, we are willing to withdraw."—"Ah!" exclaimed the priest of Dintzen, looking at the books of the Zurichers, "if the Greek and Hebrew languages had never entered our country, there would have been fewer heresies!"— "St. Jerome," said another, "has translated the Bible for us; we do not want the books of the Jews!"—"If the Zurichers are turned out," said the banneret of Ilantz, "the commune will interfere."—"Well then," replied others, "let them listen, but be silent." The Zurichers remained accordingly, and their Bible with them.

After this Comander stood up and read the first of the theses he had published; it ran thus: "The christian Church is born of the Word of God; it must abide by this Word, and listen to no other voice." He then proved what he had advanced by numerous passages from Scripture. "He trod with a firm step," said an eye-witness, "each time setting down his foot with the firmness of an ox."—"There is too much of this," said the vicar.—"When he is at table with his friends listening to the pipers," said Hofmeister, "he does not find it too long."

Then a man arose and advanced from the midst of the crowd, tossing his arms, knitting his brows, blinking his eyes, and who appeared to have lost his senses; he rushed towards the reformer, and many thought he was about to strike him. He was a schoolmaster of Coire. "I have committed several questions to writing," said he to Comander;" answer them instantly."—"I am here," said the reformer of the Grisons, "to defend my doctrine: attack it, and I will defend it; or else return to your place. I will answer you when I have done." The schoolmaster remained a moment in suspense. "Very well," said he at last, and returned to his seat.

It was proposed to pass on to the doctrine of the sacraments. The Abbot of St. Luke's declared that he could not approach such a subject without awe, and the horrified curate in alarm made the sign [427] of the cross. The schoolmaster of Coire, who had already made one attempt to attack Comander, began with much volubility to argue in favour of the doctrine of the sacrament according to the text, "This is my body."— "My dear Berre," said Comander, "how do you understand these words, John is Elias?"—"I understand," replied Berre, who saw what Comander was aiming at, "that he was really and essentially Elias."—"Why then," continued Comander, "did John the Baptist himself say to the Pharisees that he was not Elias?" The schoolmaster was silent: at last he replied, "It is true." Everybody began to laugh, even those who had urged him to speak.

The Abbot of St. Luke's made a long speech on the eucharist, which closed the conference. Seven priests embraced the evangelical doctrine; complete religious liberty was proclaimed, and the Romish worship was abolished in several churches. "Christ," to use the language of Salandronius, "grew up everywhere in these mountains, as the tender grass of spring; and the pastors were like living fountains, watering these lofty valleys."

The Reform made still more rapid strides at Zurich. The Dominicans, the Augustines, the Capuchins, so long at enmity, were reduced to the necessity of living together; a foretaste of hell for these poor monks. In the place of these corrupted

institutions were founded schools, an hospital, a theological college: learning and charity everywhere supplanted indolence and selfishness.

CHAPTER 13

The Oligarchs—Bernese Mandate of 1526 in Favour of the Papacy—Discussion at Baden—Regulations of the Discussion—Riches and Poverty—Eck and Oecolampadius—Discussion—Zwingle's Share in the Discussion—Vaunts of the Romanists—Abusive Language of a Monk—Close of the Disputation

These victories of the Reformation could not remain unnoticed. Monks, priests, and prelates, in distraction, felt that the ground was everywhere slipping from beneath their feet, and that the Romish Church was on the point of sinking under unprecedented dangers. The oligarchs of the Cantons, the advocates of foreign pensions and capitulations, saw that they could delay no longer, if they wished to preserve their privileges; and at the very moment when the Church was frightened and beginning to sink, they stretched out their mailed hands to save it. A Stein and a John Hug of Lucerne united with a John Faber; and the civil authority rushed to the support of that hierarchical power which openeth its mouth to blaspheme and maketh war upon the saints.

Their first efforts were directed against Berne. The seven Roman-catholic cantons, in collusion with the Bernese oligarchs, sent a deputation to that city, who laid their complaints before the council on Whitmonday 1526. "All order is destroyed in the Church," said the schulthess (chief magistrate) of Lucerne, "God is blasphemed, the sacraments, the mother of God, and the saints are despised, and imminent and terrible calamities threaten to dissolve our praiseworthy confederation." At the same time the Bernese partisans of Rome, in harmony with the Forest cantons, had summoned to Berne the deputies of the country, chosen from those who were devoted to the papacy. Some of them had the courage to pronounce in favour of the Gospel. The sitting was stormy. "Berne must renounce the evangelical faith and walk with us," said the Forest cantons.

The Bernese councils decreed that they would maintain "the ancient christian faith, the holy sacraments, the mother of God, the saints, and the ornaments of the churches." Thus Rome triumphed, and the mandate of 1526 was about to annul that of 1523. In effect, all the married priests not born in the canton were compelled to leave it; they drove from their borders all who were suspected of Lutheranism; they exercised a vigilant censorship over every work sold by the booksellers, and certain books were publicly burnt. Even John Faber, with audacious falsehood, said publicly that Haller had bound himself before the council to perform mass again, and to preach the doctrine of Rome. It was resolved to take advantage of so favourable an opportunity to crush the new faith.

For a long while public opinion had been demanding a discussion; this was the only means left of quieting the people. "Convince us by the Holy Scriptures," said the council of Zurich to the diet, "and we will comply with your wishes."—"The Zurichers," it was everywhere said, "have made you a promise; if you can convince them by the Bible, why not do so; if you cannot, why do you not conform to the Bible?"

The conferences held at Zurich had exercised an immense influence, and it was felt necessary to oppose them by a conference held in a Romish city, with all necessary precautions to secure the victory to the pope's party.

True, these discussions had been pronounced unlawful, but means were found to evade this difficulty. "It is only intended," said they, "to check and condemn the pestilent doctrines of Zwingle."

This being settled, they looked about for a vigorous champion, and[428]

Doctor Eck offered himself. He feared nothing. "Zwingle no doubt has milked more cows than he has read books," said he, by Hofmeister's account.

The Great Council of Zurich sent Dr. Eck a safe-conduct to go direct to Zurich; but Eck replied that he would wait for the answer of the confederation. Zwingle then offered to dispute at Saint Gall or Schaffhausen; but the council, acting on an article of the federal compact, which provided "that every accused person should be tried in the place of his abode," ordered Zwingle to withdraw his offer.

At last the diet fixed that the conference should take place at Baden on the 16th of May 1526. This meeting promised to be important; for it was the result and the seal of the alliance which had just been concluded between the clergy and the oligarchs of the confederation. "See," said Zwingle to Vadian, "what Faber and the oligarchs now venture to attempt."

Accordingly, the decision of the diet produced a great sensation in Switzerland. It was not doubted that a conference held under such auspices would be favourable to the Reformation. Are not the five cantons the most devoted to the pope supreme in Baden, said the Zurichers? Have they not already declared Zwingle's doctrine heretical, and pursued it with fire and sword? Was not Zwingle burnt in effigy at Lucerne, with every mark of ignominy? At Friburg, were not his writings committed to the flames? Do they not everywhere call for his death? Have not the cantons that exercise sovereign rights in Baden declared, that in whatever part of their territory Zwingle made his appearance, he should be apprehended? Did not Uberlinger, one of

their chiefs, say that the only thing in the world that he desired was to hand Zwingle, though he should be called a hangman all the rest of his days? And has not Doctor Eck himself, for years past, been crying out that the heretics must be attacked with fire and sword? What then will be the end of this conference? what other result can it have, but the death of the reformer?

Such were the fears that agitated the commission appointed at Zurich to examine into the affair. Zwingle, an eye-witness of their agitation, rose and said: "You know what happened at Baden to the valiant men of Stammheim, and how the blood of the Wirths dyed the scaffold and it is to the very place of their execution that they challenge us! Let Zurich, Berne, Saint Gall, or even Basle, Constance, and Schaffhausen, be selected for the conference; let it be agreed to discuss essential points only, employing nothing else than the Word of God; let no judge be set above it; and then I am ready to appear."

Meanwhile, fanaticism was already bestirring itself and striking down its victims. A consistory, headed by that same Faber who had challenged Zwingle, on the 10th of May 1526, about a week before the discussion at Baden, condemned to the flames, as a heretic, an evangelical minister named John Hugel, pastor of Lindau, who walked to the place of execution singing the Te Deum. At the same time, another minister, Peter Spengler, was drowned at Friburg by order of the Bishop of Constance.

Sinister rumours reached Zwingle from all quarters. His brotherin-law, Leonard Tremp, wrote to him from Berne: "I entreat you, as you regard you life, not to repair to Baden. I know that they will not respect your safe-conduct." It was affirmed that a plan had been formed to seize and gag him, throw him into a boat, and carry him of to some secret place. With these threats and persecutions before them, the council of Zurich decreed that Zwingle should not go to Baden.

The discussion being fixed for the 19th of May, the disputants and the representatives of the cantons and bishops began to arrive gradually. On the side of he Roman Catholics appeared in the foremost place the warlike and vain-glorious Doctor Eck; on the side of the Protestants, the retiring and gentle Oecolampadius. The latter was well aware of the perils attending this discussion. "He had long hesitated, like a timid stag worried by furious dogs," says an old historian; at length he decided on going to Baden, previously making this solemn declaration, "I acknowledge no other standard of judgment than the Word of God." At first, he had earnestly desired that Zwingle should share his danger; but he soon became convinced that, if the intrepid doctor had appeared in that fanatical city, the anger of the Romanists, kindling at his sight, would have caused the death of both of them.

They began by determining the regulations of the conference. Doctor Eck proposed that the deputies of the Forest Cantons should be empowered to pronounce the final judgment; which was, in truth, anticipating the condemnation of the reformed doctrines. Thomas Plater, who had come from Zurich to attend the colloquy, was despatched by Oecolampadius to ask Zwingle's advice. Arriving [429] during the night, he was with difficulty admitted into the reformer's house. "Unlucky disturber," said Zwingle to him, as he rubbed his eyes, "for six weeks I have not gone to bed, owing to this discussion. What are your tidings?" Plater stated Eck's demands. "And who can make those peasants understand such things?" replied Zwingle; "they would be much more at home in milking their cows."

On the 21st of May the conference opened. Eck and Faber, accompanied by prelates, magistrates, and doctors, robed in garments of damask and silk, and adorned with rings, chains, and crosses, repaired to the church. Eck haughtily ascended a pulpit splendidly decorated, while the humble Oecolampadius, meanly clothed, was forced to take his seat in front of his opponent on a rudely carved stool. "All the time the conference lasted," said the chronicler Bullinger, "Eck and his friends were lodged at the Baden parsonage, faring sumptuously, living gaily and scandalously, and drinking much wine, with which the abbot of Wettingen provided them. Eck took the baths at Baden (it was said) but in wine. The evangelicals, on the contrary, made a sorry appearance, and the people laughed at them as at a troop of mendicants. Their way of living was in strong contrast to that of the papal champions. The landlord of the Pike, the inn at which Oecolampadius lodged, being curious to know what the latter did in his room, reported that every time he peeped in, he found him reading or praying. It must be confessed (said he) that he is a very pious heretic."

The disputation lasted eighteen days, and during the whole time the clergy walked daily in solemn procession, chanting litanies in order to ensure victory. Eck alone spoke in defense of the Romish doctrines. He was still the champion of the Leipsic disputation, with the same German accent, broad shoulders, and strong lungs, an excellent town-crier, and in outward appearance having more resemblance to a butcher than a theologian. According to his usual custom he disputed with great violence, seeking to gall his adversaries by sarcasm, and from time to time slipping out an oath. But the president never called him to order.

Eck stamps with his feet, and thumps with his hands, He blusters, he swears, and he scolds;

Whatever the pope and the cardinals teach, Is the faith, he declares, that he holds.

Oecolampadius, on the contrary, with his calm features and noble and patriarchal air, spoke with so much mildness, and at the same time with such courage and ability, that even his adversaries, affected and impressed, said one to another: "Oh! that the tall sallow man were on our side." At times, however, he was moved when he saw the hatred and violence of his auditors: "How impatiently they listen to me!" said he; "but God will not forsake His glory, and that is all we seek."

Oecolampadius having combated Dr. Eck's first thesis on the real presence, Haller, who had come to Baden after the opening of the conference, entered the lists against the second. But little used to such conferences, of a timid character, tied down by the orders of his government, and embarrassed by the looks of his avoyer, Gaspard of Mullinen, a great enemy to the Reformation, Haller possessed not the haughty confidence of his opponent; but he had more real strength. When Haller had finished, Oecolampadius returned to the combat, and pressed Eck so closely, that the latter was compelled to fall back on the customs of the Church. "Custom," replied Oecolampadius, "has no force in our Switzerland, unless it be according to the constitution; now, in matters of faith, the Bible is our constitution." The third theses on the invocation of saints; the fourth on images; the fifth on purgatory, were successively discussed. No one rose to contest the truth of the two last, which turned on original sin and baptism.

Zwingle took an active part in the whole of the discussion. The Romish party, which had appointed four secretaries, had forbidden all other persons to take notes under pain of death. But Jerome Walsch, a student from the Valais, who possessed an excellent memory, impressed on his mind all that he heard, and on returning home, hastened to commit it to writing. Thomas Plater and Zimmerman of Winterthur carried these notes to Zwingle every day, with letters from Oecolampadius, and brought back the reformer's answers. Soldiers armed with halberds were posted at all the gates of Baden, and it was only by inventing different excuses that these two messengers evaded the inquiries of the sentinels, who could not understand why they were so frequently passing to and fro. Thus Zwingle, though absent from Baden in body, was present in spirit.

He advised and strengthened his friends, and refuted his adversaries. "Zwingle," said Oswald Myconius, "has laboured more by his meditations, his sleepless nights, and the advice which he transmit- [430] ted to Baden, than he would have done by discussing in person in the midst of his enemies."

During the whole conference, the Roman Catholics were in commotion, sending letters in every direction and loudly boasting of their victory. "Oecolampadius,"

exclaimed they, "vanquished by Dr. Eck and laid prostrate in the lists, has sung his recantation; the dominion of the pope will be everywhere restored." These statements were circulated through the cantons, and the people, prompt to believe everything they hear, gave credit to all the vaunts of the Romish partisans.

When the dispute was finished, the monk Murner of Lucerne, nicknamed "the tom-cat," stepped forward, and read forty charges against Zwingle. "I thought," said he, "that the coward would come and reply to them; but he has not appeared. Well, then, by every law, both human and divine, I declare forty times that the tyrant of Zurich and all his partisans are traitors, liars, perjurers, adulterers, infidels, robbers, sacrilegers, gallows-birds, and such that every honest man must blush at having any intercourse whatever with them." Such was the abuse which at this time was honoured with the name of "christian controversy," by doctors whom the Romish church should herself disavow.

Great agitation prevailed in Baden; the general impression was, that the Roman champions had talked the loudest, but argued the weakest. Only Oecolampadius and ten of his friends voted against Eck's theses; while eighty persons, including the presidents of the debate and all the monks of Wittingen, adopted them. Haller had quitted Baden before the end of the conference.

The majority of the diet then decreed that, as Zwingle, the chief of this pestilent doctrine, had refused to appear, and as the ministers who had come to Baden had resisted all conviction, they were all together cast out from the bosom of the catholic church.

CHAPTER 14

Consequences at Basle, Berne, Saint Gall, and other Places—Diet at Zurich—The small Cantons—Threats against Berne—Foreign Support

But this famous conference, owing to the zeal of the oligarchs and clergy, was destined to be fatal to both. Those who had combated for the Gospel were, on their return home, to fill their countrymen with enthusiasm for the cause they had defended, and two of the most important cantons in the Helvetic alliance, Berne and Basle, were thenceforth to begin their separation from the papacy.

The first blows were to fall on Oecolampadius, a stranger in Switzerland; and he did not return to Basle without apprehension. But his anxiety was soon dissipated. The mildness of his language had struck all impartial witnesses, much more than the clamours of Dr. Eck, and all pious men received him with acclamation. The adversaries made, in truth, every exertion to drive him from the pulpit, but in vain; he taught and preached with greater energy than before, and the people had never shown such thirst for the Word.

Similar results followed at Berne. The conference at Baden, intended to crush the Reformation, gave it a new impulse in this canton, the most powerful of all the Swiss league. Haller had no sooner arrived in the capital, than the Smaller Council had summoned him before them, and ordered him to celebrate the mass. Haller demanded permission to reply before the Great Council, and the people, thinking it their duty to defend their pastor, hastened to the spot. Haller in alarm declared that he would rather leave the city than be the occasion of any disturbance. Upon this, tranquility being restored: "If I am required to perform this ceremony," said the reformer, "I must resign my office; the honour of God and the truth of his Holy Word are dearer to me than any care about what I shall eat or wherewithal I shall be clothed."

Haller uttered these words with emotion; the members of the council were affected; even some of his opponents burst into tears. Once more it was found that moderation was stronger than power. To satisfy Rome in some degree, Haller was deprived of his canonry, but nominated preacher. His most violent enemies, Lewis and Anthony Diesbach, and Anthony d'Erlach, incensed at this resolution, immediately withdrew from the council and the city, and renounced their citizenship. "Berne stumbled," said Haller, "but has risen up again with greater strength than ever." This firmness in the Bernese made a deep impression in Switzerland.

But the results of the conference at Baden were not limited to Basle and Berne. While these events were taking place in these powerful cities, a movement, more or less similar, was going on in several other states of the confederation. The preachers of St. Gall, on their return from Baden, proclaimed the Gospel; the images [431] were removed from the parochial church of St. Lawrence after a conference, and the inhabitants sold their costly garments, their jewels, rings, and gold chains, to found almshouses. The Reformation despoiled, but it was to clothe the poor; and the spoils were those of the reformed themselves.

At Mulhausen the Gospel was preached with fresh courage; Thurgovia and the Rheinthal daily approximated more and more to Zurich. Immediately after the disputation, Zurzach removed the images from its churches, and almost the whole district of Baden received the Gospel.

Nothing was better calculated to show which party had really triumphed; and hence Zwingle, as he looked around him, gave glory to God. "We have been attacked in many ways," said he, "but the Lord is not only above their threats, but also the wars themselves. In the city and canton of Zurich there is an admirable agreement in favour of the Gospel. We shall overcome all things by prayers offered up with faith." And shortly after, addressing Haller, Zwingle said: "Everything here below has its course. The rude north wind is followed by the gentle breeze. After the scorching heat of summer, autumn pours forth its treasures. And now, after severe contests, the Creator of all things, whom we serve, has opened a way for us into the camp of our adversaries. At last we may welcome among us the christian doctrine, that dove so long repulsed, and which ceased not to watch for the hour of her return. Be thou the Noah to receive and save her."

This same year, Zurich had made an important acquisition. Conrad Pellican, superior of the Franciscans at Basle, professor of divinity at the age of twenty-four, had been invited, through Zwingle's exertions, to be Hebrew professor at Zurich. "I have long since renounced the pope," said he on arriving, "and desired to live to Jesus Christ." Pellican, by his critical talents, became one of the most useful labourers in the work of the Reformation.

Zurich, still excluded from the diet by the Romish cantons, wishing to take advantage of the more favourable disposition manifested by some of the confederates, convened, in the beginning of 1527, a diet to be held in Zurich itself. The deputies of Berne, Basle, Schaffhausen, Appenzell, and St. Gall attended it. "We desire," said the deputies of Zurich, "that the Word of God, which leads us solely to Christ crucified, should be the only thing preached, taught, and exalted. We abandon all human

doctrines, whatever may have been the custom of our forefathers; being assured that had they possessed this light of the Divine Word which we enjoy, they would have embraced it with more reverence than we their feeble descendants have done." The deputies present promised to take the representations of Zurich into consideration.

Thus the breach in the walls of Rome was widened daily. The discussion at Baden had been intended to repair it; and from that time, on the contrary, the wavering cantons seemed willing to walk with Zurich. Already the inhabitants of the plain inclined towards the Reformation; already it was hemming in the mountains; already it was invading them, and the primitive cantons, which were as the cradle, and are still the citadel, of Switzerland, shut up in their higher Alps, seemed alone to adhere firmly to the doctrine of their sires. These mountaineers, continually exposed to violent storms, to avalanches, to overflowing torrents and rivers, are compelled all their lives to struggle against these formidable enemies, and to sacrifice everything to preserve the meadow in which their herds graze, and the cottage where they shelter themselves from the storms, and which the first inundation sweeps away. Accordingly the conservative principle is strongly developed in them, and transmitted from age to age, from generation to generation. To preserve what they have received from their fathers constitutes the whole wisdom of these mountains. These rude Helvetians were then struggling against the Reformation, which aimed at changing their faith and their worship, as they struggle to this day against the torrents that fall in thunder from their snowy peaks, or against the new political ideas that have been established at their very doors in the surrounding cantons. They will be the last to lay down their arms before that twofold power which already raises its banners on all the hills around, and threatens daily and more nearly these conservative districts.

Accordingly these cantons, at the period which I am recording, still more irritated against Berne than against Zurich, and trembling lest this powerful state should desert them, assembled their deputies in Berne itself a week after the conference at Zurich. They called on the council to depose the new teachers, to prosecute their doctrines, and to maintain the ancient and true christian faith, as confirmed by past ages and confessed by the martyrs. "Convoke all the bailiwicks of the canton," added they; "if you refuse, we will take it upon ourselves." The Bernese replied with irritation: "We have power enough ourselves to speak to those under our jurisdiction."

This reply only increased the anger of the Forest Cantons, and these cantons, which had been the cradle of the political freedom [432] of Switzerland, alarmed at the progress of religious liberty, began to seek, even from without, for allies to destroy it. To combat the enemies of foreign service, that foreign service might reasonably be

resorted to; and if the oligarchy of Switzerland could not suffice alone, was it not natural to have recourse to the princes, their allies? In fact, Austria, who had found it impossible to maintain her own authority in the confederation, was ready to interfere to strengthen the power of Rome. Berne learnt with dismay that Ferdinand, brother of Charles V, was making preparations against Zurich and all those who adhered to the Reformation.

Circumstances were becoming more critical. A succession of events, more or less unfortunate, the excesses of the fanatics, the disputes with Luther on the Eucharist, and others besides, appear to have seriously compromised the Reformation in Switzerland. The discussion at Baden had disappointed the hopes of the papal party, and the sword they had brandished against their adversaries had broken in their hands; but this had only increased their vexation and anger, and they were preparing for a fresh effort.

Already the imperial power itself was beginning to move; and the Austrian bands which had been routed in the defiles of Morgarten and on the heights of Sempach, were ready to enter Switzerland with colours flying, to re-establish the tottering power of Rome. The moment was critical; it was no longer possible to halt between two opinions, and be neither "muddy nor clear." Berne and other cantons, which had long hesitated, were now to come to a decision. They must either promptly return to the papacy, or take their stand with fresh courage under the banners of Christ.

A Frenchman from the mountains of Dauphiny, William Farel by name, at this time gave a powerful impulse to Switzerland, decided the Reformation of Roman Helvetia, still immersed in deep slumber, and thus turned the balance throughout the whole confederation in favour of the new doctrines. Farel arrived on the field of battle like those fresh troops which, when the issue of the contest hangs in the balance, rush into the thickest of the fight and decide the victory. He prepared the way in Switzerland for another Frenchman, whose austere faith and commanding genius were to put a finishing hand to the Reformation, and make the work complete. By means of these illustrious men, France took her part in that vast commotion which agitated christian society. It is now time that we should turn our eyes towards that country.

BOOK XII—The French 1500—1526

CHAPTER 1

Universality of Christianity—Enemies of the Reform in France—Heresy and Persecution in Dauphiny—A country Mansion—The Farel Family—Pilgrimage to the Holy Cross—Immorality and Superstition—William desires to become a Student

Universality is one of the essential characteristics of Christianity. It is not so with human religions. They are adapted to a certain people, and to the degree of cultivation they have attained; they keep these nations stationary, or if by any extraordinary circumstance the people attain a fuller growth, their religion is left behind, and by that means becomes useless to them.

There has been an Egyptian, a Grecian, a Latin, and even a Jewish religion; Christianity is the only religion of mankind. Its starting point in man is sin; and this is a characteristic not peculiar to anyone race, but is the heritage of every human being. Hence the Gospel, as satisfying the universal and most elevated wants of our nature, is received as coming from God by the most barbarous and by the most civilised nations. It does not, like the religions of antiquity, deify national peculiarities; but it does not destroy them as modern cosmopolitism would do. It does better; it sanctifies, ennobles, and raises them to a holy unity by the new and living principle it communicates to them.

The introduction of Christianity into the world has wrought a great revolution in history. Until then, there had only been a history of nations; now there is a history of mankind; and the idea of a universal education of the human race, accomplished by Jesus Christ, has become the historian's compass, the clue to history, and the hope of the nations.

But Christianity exerts its influence not only on all nations, but also on every period of their history. At the moment of its appearance, the world was like a torch about to become extinct, and Christianity rekindled it with fire from heaven.

Subsequently, the barbarian tribes, having rushed upon the Roman empire, had shattered and confounded every thing; and Christianity, stemming that desolating torrent with the cross, subdued by it the savage children of the north, and gave society a new form.

Yet an element of corruption already lay hid in the religion carried by courageous missionaries to those barbarous tribes. Their faith came from Rome almost as much as from the Bible. This element soon gathered strength; man everywhere substituted himself for God,—the essential characteristic of the Romish church; and a renovation of religion became necessary. This Christianity accomplished at the epoch of which we are treating.

The history of the Reformation in the countries that we have hitherto surveyed has shown us the new doctrine rejecting the extravagances of enthusiasts and of the new prophets; but in the country towards which we now turn our attention, infidelity is the shoal which it has to encounter. Nowhere had bolder protests been made against the superstitions and abuses of the Church: nowhere had there been a more striking development of a certain love of learning, independent of Christianity, which often ends in irreligion. France carried in her bosom two reformations at the same time,—the one of man, the other of God. "Two nations were in her womb, and two manner of people were to be separated from her bowels."

In France, the Reformation had to combat not only with infidelity as well as superstition, but there was a third antagonist which it had not yet encountered, at least in such force, among the people of German origin: this was immorality. The scandals in the Church were very great; debauchery sat on the throne of Francis I and Catherine de Medicis; and the austere virtues of the reformers irritated these "Sardanapaluses." Everywhere, no doubt, but especially in France, the Reformation was of necessity not only doctrinal and ecclesiastical, but moral also.

Those violent enemies which the Reformation encountered simultaneously in France, gave it a character altogether peculiar. Nowhere did it so often dwell in dungeons, or so much resemble primitive Christianity in faith, in charity, and in the number of its martyrs. If, in the countries of which we have hitherto spoken, the Reformation was more glorious by its triumphs, in that which is now to engage our attention, it was still more so by its defeats. If elsewhere it could point to thrones and sovereign councils, here it might point to scaffolds and "hill-side" meetings. Whoever knows what constitutes the true glory of Christianity upon earth, and the features that assimilate it to its Head, will study with a livelier feeling of respect and love the often blood-stained history that we now proceed to relate.

The majority of the men who have afterwards glittered on the stage of the world were born in the provinces where their minds first began to expand. Paris is a tree that presents many flowers and fruits to the eye, but whose roots spread far and wide

into the bosom of the earth, to draw from thence the nutritious juices which they transform. The Reformation also followed this law.

The Alps, which beheld bold and christian men spring up in every canton and almost in every valley of Switzerland, were destined in France also to cover with their lengthened shadows the infancy of some of the first reformers. For ages they had guarded the treasure more or less pure in their high valleys, among the inhabitants of the Piedmontese districts of Luzerne, Angrogne, and La Peyrouse. The truth, which Rome could not reach there, had spread from these valleys to the other side of these mountains, and along their base to Provence and Dauphiny.

The year after the accession of Charles VIII, son of Louis XI, a sickly and timid child, Innocent VIII had assumed the pontifical tiara (1484). He had seven or eight sons by different mothers; and hence, according to an epigram of the times, Rome unanimously saluted him with the name of Father.

There was at that time on all the slopes of the Dauphinese Alps, and along the banks of the Durance, a new growth of the old Waldensian opinions. "The roots," says an old chronicler, "were continually putting forth new shoots in every direction." Bold men called the Roman Church the church of devils, and maintained that it was as profitable to pray in a stable as in a church.

The priests, the bishops, and the Roman legates uttered a cry of alarm, and on the 5th kalends of May (27th April) 1487, Innocent VIII, the father of the Romans, issued a bull against these humble Christians. "To arms," said the pontiff, "and trample these heretics under foot as venomous serpents."

At the approach of the legate, followed by an army of eighteen thousand men and a number of volunteers, who wished to share the [434] spoils of the Waldenses, the latter abandoned their houses and took refuge in the mountains, caverns, and clefts of the rocks, as the birds flee for shelter when the storm begins to lower. Not a valley, nor a wood, nor a rock, escaped their persecutors; everywhere in this part of the Alps, and particularly on the Italian side, these poor disciples of Christ were hunted down like beasts of prey. At last the pope's satellites were worn out; their strength was exhausted, their feet could no longer scale the steep retreats of the "heretics," and their arms refused to strike.

In these alpine districts, then disturbed by Romish fanaticism, three leagues from the ancient town of Gap, in the direction of Grenoble, not far from the flowery turf that clothes the table-land of Bayard's mountain, at the foot of the Aiguille and

near the pass of Glaize, towards the place where the Buzon takes its rise, stood and still stands a group of houses, half hidden by the surrounding trees, and which bears the name of Farel,—or, in the dialect of the country, Fareau. On an extensive terrace raised above the neighbouring cottages might be seen a house of that class which is denominated Gentilhommiere, a manor-house. It was surrounded by an orchard which led to the village. Here, in these days of trouble, dwelt a noble family of established piety, known by the name of Farel. In 1489, the very year in which the papacy was employing its severest measures in Dauphiny, was born in this modest mansion a son who received the name of William. Three brothers, Daniel, Walter, and Claude, and one sister, grew up with William, and shared his sports on the banks of the Buzon and at the foot of the Bayard.

There William's childhood and early youth were passed. His parents were among the most devoted servants of the papacy. "My father and mother believed everything," he tells us himself; "and accordingly they brought up their children in all the observances of Romish devotion."

God had bestowed rare qualities on William Farel, such as were fitted to give him a great ascendency over his fellows. Possessing a penetrating mind and lively imagination, sincere and upright, having a greatness of soul that never allowed him, at whatever risk, to betray the convictions of his heart, he was remarkable also for ardor, fire, indomitable courage, and daring, which never shrunk from any obstacle. But, at the same time, he had all the defects allied to these qualities; and his parents were often compelled to check his impetuosity.

William threw himself with his whole soul into the superstitious habits of his credulous family. "I am horror-struck," said he, "when I consider the hours, the prayers, and the divine honours, which I myself have offered and caused others to offer to the cross and other such things."

Four leagues to the south of Gap, near Tallard, in a hill that rises above the impetuous stream of the Durance, was a place in great repute, named Sainte Croix (the holy cross). William was only seven or eight years old when his father and mother resolved to take him thither on a pilgrimage. "The cross in that place," they told him, "is made of the very wood on which Christ was crucified."

The family began their journey, and at last reached the highly venerated cross, before which they all fell prostrate. After gazing for a time on the sacred wood and the copper of the cross, the latter being made (as the priest told them) of the basin in which Christ washed his apostles' feet, the pilgrims turned their eyes to a small

crucifix attached to the cross: "When the devils send us hail and thunder," continued the priest, "this crucifix moves about so violently, that it seems to get loose from the cross, as if desirous of running at the devil, and it continues throwing out sparks of fire against the storm; if it were not for this, nothing would be left upon earth."

The pious pilgrims were deeply moved by the account of these wonderful prodigies. "No one," continued the priest, "sees or knows aught of these things except myself and this man." The pilgrims turned their heads, and saw a strange-looking person standing near them. "It was frightful to look at him," said Farel. White scales covered the pupils of his eyes, "whether they were there in reality, or Satan only made them appear so." This extraordinary man, whom the incredulous denominated "the priest's wizard," on being appealed to by the latter, immediately replied that the prodigy was true.

A new episode completed the picture by mingling a suspicion of criminal disorders with these superstitions. "There came up a young woman, intent on other devotion than that of the cross, carrying her infant wrapped in a cloth. Then the priest went up, took hold of the woman and child, and led them into the chapel. I may safely assert, that never did dancer take a woman and lead her out more lovingly than he did. But such was our blindness, that neither their looks nor [435] their gestures, even when they had behaved in an unseemly manner before us, appeared otherwise than good and holy. It was clear that the woman and my gallant of a priest understood the miracle thoroughly, and made it a cover to their intercourse."

Such a faithful picture of religion and morals in France at the commencement of the Reformation. Morality and belief were alike poisoned, and both required a powerful renovation. The greater the value attached to external works, the farther men were removed from sanctification of heart; dead ordinances had been everywhere substituted for a christian life, and a strange but not unnatural union had taken place between the most scandalous debauchery and the most superstitious devotion. Theft had been committed before the altar, seduction practiced in the confessional, poison mingled with the consecrated elements, adultery perpetrated at the foot of the cross. Superstition, by destroying belief, had destroyed morality.

There were, however, numerous exceptions in the Christianity of the middle ages. Even a superstitious faith might be sincere, and of this William Farel is an example. The same zeal that afterwards urged him to travel to so many different places to spread the knowledge of Jesus Christ was at this time attracting him wherever the Church exhibited a miracle or claimed any adoration. Dauphiny had its seven wonders, which long possessed the power of striking the imagination of the people.

But the beauties of nature that surrounded him had also their influence in raising his soul to the Creator.

The magnificent chain of the Alps, those summits covered with eternal snow,—those vast rocks, here rearing their sharp peaks to heaven, there stretching their immense and jagged ridges high above the clouds, as if an island was suspended in the air;—all these wonders of creation, which were at this time elevating the soul of Ulrich Zwingle in the Tockenburg, were appealing also in mute but powerful language to the heart of William Farel among the mountains of Dauphiny. He thirsted for life, for knowledge, and for light;—he aspired to be something great;—he asked permission to study.

This was a great blow to his father, who thought that a young noble ought to know nothing beyond his rosary and his sword. At this time fame was trumpeting the prowess of a young countryman of William Farel's, a Dauphinese like himself, named Du Terrail, but better known as Bayard, who at the battle of the Tar, on the other side of the Alps, had just given a signal display of courage. "Such sons," it was observed, "are like arrows in the hand of a strong man. Blessed is the man that hath his quiver full of them!" Accordingly, Farel's father opposed the taste which William manifested for learning. But the young man was not to be shaken. God destined him for nobler conquests than those of Bayard. He persevered in his entreaties, and the old gentleman gave way at last.

Farel immediately applied to study with surprising ardor. The masters whom he found in Dauphiny were of little help to him, and he had to contend with bad methods and the incapability of his teachers. These difficulties excited instead of discouraging him, and he soon surmounted these obstacles. His brothers followed his example. Daniel afterwards entered on the career of politics, and was employed in important negotiations concerning religion. Walter gained the entire confidence of the Count of Furstemberg.

Farel, eager in the pursuit of knowledge, having learnt all that could be acquired in his province, turned his eyes elsewhere. The renown of the university of Paris had long filled the christian world. He desired to see "this mother of all learning, this true lamp of the Church which never knew eclipse, that clear and polished mirror of the faith, dimmed by no cloud, and spotted by no touch." He obtained the permission of his parents, and set out for the capital of France.

CHAPTER 2

Louis XII and the Assembly of Tours—Francis and Margaret—Learned Men—Lefevre—His Courses at the University—Meeting between Lefevre and Farel—Farel's Hesitation and Researches—First Awakening—Lefevre's Prophecy—Teaches Justification by Faith—Objections—Disorder of the Colleges—Effects on Farel—Election—Sanctification of Life

One day in the year 1510, or shortly after, the young Dauphinese arrived in Paris. The province had made him an ardent follower of the papacy; the capital was to make him something very different. In France the Reformation was not destined to go forth, as in Germany, from a small city. All the movements that agitate the people proceed from the metropolis. A concurrence of providential circumstances made Paris, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, a focus whence a spark of life might easily escape. The young man from the neighbourhood of Gap, who arrived there humble and ignorant, was to receive that spark in his heart, and many others.

Louis XII, the father of his people, had just convoked the repre- [436] sentatives of the French clergy to meet at Tours. This prince seems to have anticipated the times of the Reformation; so that had this great revolution taken place during his reign, the whole of France might have become protestant. The assembly of Tours had declared that the king possessed the right of waging war on the pope, and of enforcing the decrees of the Council of Basle. These measures were the object of general conversation in the colleges, the city, and the court; and must have made a deep impression on the mind of young Farel.

Two children were then growing up in the court of Louis XII. One was a prince of tall stature, striking features, who showed little moderation in his character, and followed blindly wherever his passions led him; so that the king was in the habit of saying: "That great boy will spoil all." This was Francis of Angouleme, duke of Valois, and cousin to the king. Boisy, his tutor, had taught him, however, to honour literature.

By the side of Francis was his sister Margaret, his senior by two years, "a princess," says Brantome, "of great mind and ability, both natural and acquired." Accordingly, Louis had spared no pains in her education, and the most learned men in the kingdom hastened to acknowledge her as their patroness.

Already, indeed, a group of illustrious men surrounded these two Valois. William Budoeus, a man giving the run to his passions, fond of the chase, living only for his hawks, his horses, and his hounds, on a sudden, at the age of twenty-three, had

stopped short, sold his hunting train, and applied himself to study with the zeal he had formerly displayed in scouring the fields and forests with his dogs; the physician Cop, Francis Vatable, whose knowledge of Hebrew was admired by the Jews themselves; James Tusan, a celebrated Hellenist; and many others, encouraged by Stephen Poncher, bishop of Paris, by Louis Ruze, the civil lieutenant, and by Francis de Luynes, and already protected by the two young Valois, resisted the violent attacks of the Sorbonne, who looked upon the study of Greek and Hebrew as the most deadly heresy. At Paris, as in Germany and Switzerland, the restoration of sound doctrine was to be preceded by the revival of letters. But in France the hands that thus prepared the materials were not destined to construct the edifice.

Among all the doctors who then adorned the capital, was observed a man of very diminutive stature, of mean appearance, and humble origin, whose intellect, learning, and powerful eloquence had an indefinable attraction for all who heard him. His name was Lefevre; and he was born about 1455 at Etaples, a village in Picardy. He had received a rude, or as Theodore Beza calls it, a barbarous education; but his genius had supplied the want of masters; and his piety, learning, and nobility of soul, shone out with so much the brighter lustre. He had travelled much, and it would appear that his desire of acquiring knowledge had led him into Asia and Africa. As early as 1493, Lefevre, then doctor of divinity, was professor in the university of Paris. He immediately occupied a distinguished rank and, in the estimation of Erasmus, was the first.

Lefevre saw that he had a task to perform. Although attached to the practices of the Romish Church, he resolved to attack the barbarism then prevailing in the university; he began to teach the various branches of philosophy with a clearness hitherto unknown. He endeavoured to revive the study of languages and learned antiquity. He went farther than this; he perceived that, as regards a work of regeneration, philosophy and learning are insufficient. Abandoning, therefore, scholasticism, which for so many ages had reigned supreme in the schools, he returned to the Bible, and revived in Christendom the study of the Holy Scriptures and evangelical learning. He did not devote his time to dry researches, he went to the heart of the Bible. His eloquence, his candour, his amiability, captivated all hearts. Serious and fervent in the pulpit, he indulged in a sweet familiarity with his pupils. "He loves me exceedingly," wrote Glarean, one of their number, to his friend Zwingle. "Full of candour and kindness, he often sings, prays, disputes, and laughs at the follies of the world with me." Accordingly, a great number of disciples from every country sat at his feet.

This man, with all his learning, submitted with the simplicity of a child to every observance of the Church. He passed as much time in the churches as in his study, so that a close union seemed destined to unite the aged doctor of Picardy and the young scholar of Dauphiny. When two natures so similar as these meet together, though it be within the wide circuit of a capital, they tend to draw near each other. In his pious pilgrimages, young Farel soon noticed an aged man, and was struck by his devotion. He prostrated himself before the images, and remained long on his knees, praying with fervour and devoutly repeating his hours. "Never," said Farel, "never had I seen a chanter of the mass sing it with greater reverence."

This man was Lefevre. William Farel immediately desired to [437] become acquainted with him; and could not restrain his joy when he found himself kindly received by this celebrated man. William had gained his object in coming to the capital. From that time his greatest pleasure was to converse with the doctor of Etaples, to listen to him, to hear his admirable lessons, and to kneel with him devoutly before the same shrines. Often might the aged Lefevre and his young disciple be seen adorning an image of the Virgin with flowers; and alone, far from all Paris, far from its scholars and its doctors, they murmured in concert the fervent prayers they offered up to Mary.

Farel's attachment to Lefevre was noticed by many. The respect felt towards the old doctor was reflected on his young disciple. This illustrious friendship drew the Dauphinese from his obscurity. He soon acquired a reputation for zeal; and many devout rich persons in Paris intrusted him with various sums of money intended for the support of the poorer students.

Sometime elapsed ere Lefevre and his disciple arrived at a clear perception of the truth. It was not the hope of a rich benefice or a propensity to a dissolute life which bound Farel to the pope; those vulgar ties were not made for souls like his. To him the pope was the visible head of the Church, a sort of deity, by whose commandments souls might be saved. Whenever he heard anyone speaking against this highly venerated pontiff, he would gnash his teeth like a furious wolf, and would have called down lightning from heaven "to overwhelm the guilty wretch with utter ruin and confusion."—"I believe," said he, "in the cross, in pilgrimages, images, vows, and relics. What the priest holds in his hands, puts into the box, and there shuts it up, eats, and gives others to eat, is my only true God, and to me there is no other, either in heaven or upon earth."—"Satan," says he in another place, "had so lodged the pope, the papacy, and all that is his in my heart, that even the pope had not so much of it in himself."

Thus, the more Farel appeared to seek God, the more his piety decayed and superstition increased in his soul; everything was going from bad to worse. He has himself described this condition in energetic language: "Alas! how I shudder at myself and at my faults," said he, "when I think upon it; and how great and wonderful a work of God it is, that man should ever have been dragged from such an abyss!"

From this abyss he emerged only by degrees. He had at first studied the profane authors; his piety finding no food there, he began to meditate on the lives of the saints; infatuated as he was before, these legends only made him still more so. He then attached himself to several doctors of the age; but as he had gone to them in wretchedness, he left them more wretched still. At last he began to study the ancient philosophers, and expected to learn from Aristotle how to be a Christian; again his hopes were disappointed. Books, images, relics, Aristotle, Mary, and the saints—all proved unavailing. His ardent soul wandered from one human wisdom to another, without finding the means of allaying its burning thirst.

Meantime the pope, allowing the writings of the Old and New Testaments to be called The Holy Bible, Farel began to read them, as Luther had done in the cloister at Erfurth; he was amazed at seeing that everything upon earth was different from what is taught in the Scriptures. Perhaps he was on the point of reaching the truth, but on a sudden a thicker darkness plunged him into another abyss. "Satan came suddenly upon me," said he, "that he might not lose his prize, and dealt with me according to his custom." A terrible struggle between the Word of God and the word of the Church then took place in his heart. If he met with any passages of Scripture opposed to the Romish practices, he cast down his eyes, blushed, and dared not believe what he read. "Alas!" said he, fearing to keep his looks fixed on the Bible, "I do not well understand these things; I must give a very different meaning to the Scriptures from that which they seem to have. I must keep to the interpretation of the Church, and indeed of the pope."

One day, as he was reading the Bible, a doctor who happened to come in rebuked him sharply. "No man," said he, "ought to read the Holy Scriptures before he has learnt philosophy and taken his degree in arts." This was a preparation the apostles had not required; but Farel believed him. "I was," says he, "the most wretched of men, shutting my eyes lest I should see."

From that time the young Dauphinese had a return to his Romish fervour. The legends of the saints inflamed his imagination. The greater the severity of the monastic rules, the greater was the attraction he felt towards them. In the midst of the woods near Paris, some Carthusians inhabited a group of gloomy cells; he visited

them with reverence, and shared in their austerities. "I was wholly employed, day and night, in serving the devil," said he, "after the fashion of [438] that man of sin, the pope. I had my Pantheon in my heart, and such a
troop of mediators, saviours, and gods, that I might well have passed for a papal register."

The darkness could not grow deeper; the morning star was soon to arise, and it was destined to appear at Lefevre's voice. There were already some gleams of light in the doctor of Etaples; an inward conviction told him that the Church could not long remain in its actual position; and often at the very moment of his return from saying mass, or of rising from before some image, the old man would turn towards his youthful disciple, and grasping him by the hand would say in a serious tone of voice: "My dear William, God will renew the world, and you will see it!" Farel did not thoroughly understand these words. Yet Lefevre did not confine himself to this mysterious language; a great change which was then wrought in him was destined to produce a similar effect on his disciple.

The old doctor was engaged in a laborious task; he was carefully collecting the legends of the saints and martyrs, and arranging them according to the order in which their names are found in the calendar. Two months had already been printed, when one of those beams of light which come from heaven, suddenly illuminated his soul. He could not resist the disgust which such puerile superstitions must ever cause in the heart of a Christian. The sublimity of the Word of God made him perceive the paltry nature of these fables. They now appeared to him no better than "brimstone fit to kindle the fire of idolatry." He abandoned his work, and throwing these legends aside, turned ardently towards the Holy Scriptures. At the moment when Lefevre, quitting the wondrous tales of the saints, laid his hand on the Word of God, a new era began in France, and is the commencement of the Reformation.

In effect, Lefevre, weaned from the fables of the Breviary, began to study the Epistles of St. Paul; the light increased rapidly in his heart, and he immediately imparted to his disciples that knowledge of the truth which we find in his commentaries. Strange doctrines were those for the school and for the age, which were then first heard in Paris, and disseminated by the press throughout the christian world. We may easily understand that the young disciples who listened to them were aroused, impressed, and changed by them; and that thus, prior to the year 1512, the dawn of a brighter day was preparing for France.

The doctrine of justification by faith, which overthrew by a single blow the subtleties of the schoolmen and the observances of popery, was boldly proclaimed in

the bosom of the Sorbonne. "It is God alone," said the doctor, and the vaulted roofs of the university must have been astonished as they re-echoed such strange sounds, "it is God alone, who by his grace, through faith, justifies unto everlasting life. There is a righteousness of works, there is a righteousness of grace; the one cometh from man, the other from God; one is earthly and passeth away, the other is heavenly and eternal; one is the shadow and the sign, the other the light and the truth; one makes sin known to us that we may escape death, the other reveals grace that we may obtain life."

"What then!" asked his hearers, as they listened to this teaching, which contradicted that of four centuries; "has anyone man been ever justified without works?" "One!" answered Lefevre, "they are innumerable. How many people of disorderly lives, who have ardently prayed for the grace of baptism, possessing faith alone in Christ, and who, if they died the moment after, have entered into the life of the blessed without works!"—"If, therefore, we are not justified by works, it is in vain that we perform them," replied some. The Paris doctor answered, and the other reformers would not perhaps have altogether approved of this reply: "Certainly not! they are not in vain. If I hold a mirror to the sun, its image is reflected; the more I polish and clear it, the brighter is the reflection; but if we allow it to become tarnished, the splendour of the sun is dimmed. It is the same with justification in those who lead an impure life." In this passage, Lefevre, like Augustine in many, does not perhaps make a sufficient distinction between sanctification and justification. The doctor of Etaples reminds us strongly of the Bishop of Hippona. Those who lead an unholy life have never received justification, and therefore cannot lose it. But Lefevre may have intended to say that the Christian, when he has fallen into any sin, loses the assurance of salvation, and not salvation itself. If so, there is no objection to be made against his doctrine.

Thus a new life and a new teaching had penetrated into the university of Paris. The doctrine of faith, formerly preached in Gaul by Pothinus and Irenaeus, was heard there again. From this time there were two parties, two people in this great school of Christendom.

Lefevre's lessons and the zeal of his disciples formed the most strik- [439] ing contrast to the scholastic teaching of the majority of the doctors, and the irregular and frivolous lives of most of the students. In the colleges, they were far more busily engaged in learning their parts in comedies, in masquerading, and in mountebank farces, than in studying the oracles of God. In these plays the honour of the great, of the princes, of the king himself, was frequently attacked. The parliament interfered about this period; and summoning the principals of several colleges before them,

forbade those indulgent masters to permit such dramas to be represented in their houses.

But a more powerful diversion than the decrees of parliament suddenly came to correct these disorders. Jesus Christ was preached. Great was the uproar on the benches of the university, and the students began to occupy themselves almost as much with the evangelical doctrines as with the quibbles of the school or with comedies. Many of those whose lives were the least irreproachable, adhered however to the doctrine of works; and feeling that the doctrine of faith condemned their way of living, they pretended that St. James was opposed to St. Paul. Lefevre, resolving to defend the treasure he had discovered, showed the agreement of these two apostles: "Does not St. James in his first Chapter declare that every good and perfect gift cometh down from above? Now, who will deny that justification is the good and perfect gift? If we see a man moving, the respiration that we perceive is to us a sign of life. Thus works are necessary, but only as signs of a living faith, which is accompanied by justification. Do eye-salves or lotions give light to the eye? No! it is the influence of the sun. Well, then, these lotions and these eye-salves are our works. The ray that the sun darts from above is justification itself."

Farel listened earnestly to this teaching. These words of salvation by grace had immediately an indescribable charm for him. Every objection fell: every struggle ceased. No sooner had Lefevre put forward this doctrine than Farel embraced it with all the ardor of his soul. He had undergone labour and conflicts enough to be aware that he could not save himself. Accordingly, immediately he saw in the Word that God saves freely, he believed. "Lefevre," said he, "extricated me from the false opinion of human merits, and taught me that everything came from grace: which I believed as soon as it was spoken." Thus by a conversion as prompt and decisive as that of St. Paul was Farel led to the faith,—that Farel who (as Theodore Beza says), undismayed by difficulties, threats, abuse, or blows, won over to Jesus Christ Montbelliard, Neufchatel, Lausanne, Aigle, and finally Geneva.

Meanwhile Lefevre, continuing his lessons, and delighting, as Luther did, in employing contrasts and paradoxes containing weighty truths, extolled the greatness of the mysteries of redemption: "Ineffable exchange," exclaimed he, "the innocent One is condemned and the criminal acquitted; the Blessing is cursed, and he who was cursed is blessed; the Life dies, and the dead live; the Glory is covered with shame, and He who was put to shame is covered with glory." The pious doctor, going still deeper, acknowledged that all salvation proceeds from the sovereignty of God's love. "Those who are saved," said he, "are saved by election, by grace, by the will of God, not by their own. Our own election, will, and works, are of no avail: the election of

God alone is profitable. When we are converted, it is not our conversion that makes us the elect of God, but the grace, will, and election of God which convert us."

But Lefevre did not confine himself to doctrines alone: if he gave to God the glory, he required obedience from man, and urged the obligations which proceed from the great privileges of the Christian. "If thou art a member of Christ's Church, thou art also a member of his body." said he; "and if thou art a member of Christ's body, thou art full of the Divinity; for in him dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Oh! if men could but understand this privilege, how chastely, purely, and holily would they live, and they would look upon all the glory of this world as disgrace, in comparison with that inner glory which is hidden from the eyes of the flesh."

Lefevre perceived that the office of a teacher of the Word is a lofty station; and he exercised it with unshaken fidelity. The corruption of the times, and particularly that of the clergy, excited his indignation, and became the subject of severe rebuke. "How scandalous it is," said he, "to see a bishop asking persons to drink with him, gambling, rattling the dice, spending his time with hawks and dogs, and in hunting, hallooing after rooks and deer, and frequenting houses of ill-fame! O men deserving a severer punishment than Sardanapalus himself!"

CHAPTER 3

Farel and the Saints—The University—Farel's Conversion—Farel and Luther—Other Disciples—Date of the Reform in France—Spontaneous Rise of the different Reforms—Which was the first?—Lefevre's Place

Thus taught Lefevre. Farel listened, trembling with emotion; he received all, and rushed suddenly into the new path that was opening before him. There was, however, one point of his ancient faith which he could not as yet entirely renounce; this was the invocation of saints. The best spirits often have these relics of darkness, which they cling to after their illumination. Farel was astonished as he heard the illustrious doctor declare that Christ alone should be invoked. "Religion has but one foundation," said Lefevre, "one object, one Head, Jesus Christ, blessed for evermore: alone hath He trodden the wine-press. Let us not then call ourselves after St. Paul, or Apollos, or St. Peter. The cross of Christ alone openeth the gates of heaven, and shutteth the gates of hell." When he heard these words, a fierce conflict took place in Farel's soul. On the one hand, he beheld the multitude of saints with the Church; on the other, Jesus Christ alone with his master. Now he inclined to one side, now to another; it was his last error and his last battle. He hesitated, he still clung to those venerable men and women at whose feet Rome falls in adoration. At length the decisive blow was struck from above. The scales fell from his eyes. Jesus alone appeared deserving of his worship. "Then," said he, "popery was utterly overthrown; I began to detest it as devilish, and the holy Word of God had the chief place in my heart."

Public events accelerated the course of Farel and his friends. Thomas de Vio, who afterwards contended with Luther at Augsburg and at Leipsic, having advanced in one of his works that the pope was the absolute monarch of the Church, Louis XII laid the book before the university in the month of February 1512. James Allmain, one of the youngest doctors, a man of profound genius and indefatigable application, read before the faculty of theology a refutation of the cardinal's assertions, which was received with the greatest applause. What impression must not such discourses have produced on the minds of Lefevre's young disciples! Could they hesitate when the university seemed impatient under the papal yoke? If the main body itself was in motion, ought not they to rush forward as skirmishers and clear the way?

"It was necessary," said Farel, "that popery should have fallen little by little from my heart; for it did not tumble down at the first shock." He contemplated the abyss of superstitions in which he had been plunged. Standing on the brink, he once more surveyed its depth with an anxious eye, and shrunk back with a feeling of terror. "Oh! what horror do I feel at myself and my sins, when I think of these things!" exclaimed

he. "O Lord," he continued, "would that my soul had served thee with a living faith, as thy obedient servants have done; would that it had prayed to and honoured thee as much as I have given my heart to the mass and to serve that enchanted wafer, giving it all honour!" In such terms did the youthful Dauphinese deplore his past life, and repeat in tears, as St. Augustine had done before: "I have known Thee too late; too late have I loved Thee!"

Farel had found Jesus Christ; and having reached the port, he was delighted to find repose after such terrible storms. "Now," said he, "everything appears to me under a fresh aspect. Scripture is cleared up; prophecy is opened; the apostles shed a strong light upon my soul. A voice, till now unknown, the voice of Christ, my Shepherd, my Master, my Teacher, speaks to me with power." He was so changed that, "instead of the murderous heart of a ravening wolf, he came back," he tells us, "quietly, like a meek and harmless lamb, having his heart entirely withdrawn from the pope, and given to Jesus Christ."

Having escaped from so great an evil, he turned towards the Bible, and began to study Greek and Hebrew with much earnestness. He read the Scriptures constantly, with ever increasing affection, and God enlightened him from day to day. He still continued to attend the churches of the established worship; but what found he there? loud voices, interminable chantings, and words spoken without understanding. Accordingly, when standing in the midst of a crowd that was passing near an image or an altar, he would exclaim, "Thou alone art God! thou alone art wise! thou alone art good! Nothing must be taken away from thy holy law, and nothing added. For thou alone art the Lord, and thou alone wilt and must command."

Thus fell in his eyes all men and all teachers from the height to which his imagination had raised them, and he now saw nothing in the world but God and his Word. The other doctors of Paris, by their [441] persecutions of Lefevre, had already fallen in his esteem; but erelong Lefevre himself, his beloved guide, was no more than a man like himself. He loved and venerated him still; but God alone became his master.

Of all the reformers, Farel and Luther are perhaps those whose early spiritual developments are best known to us, and who had to pass through the greatest struggles. Quick and ardent, men of conflict and strife, they underwent the severest trials before attaining peace. Farel is the pioneer of the Reformation in France and Switzerland; he rushes into the wood, and hews down the aged giants of the forest with his axe. Calvin came after, like Melancthon, from whom he differs indeed in character, but whom he resembles in his part as theologian and organiser. These two

men, who have something in common with the legislators of antiquity,—the one in its graceful, the other in its severe style,—built up, settled, and gave laws to the territory conquered by the first two reformers. If, however, Luther and Farel approximate in some of their features, we must acknowledge that the latter resembles the Saxon reformer in one aspect only. Besides his superior genius, Luther had, in all that concerned the Church, a moderation and wisdom, an acquaintance with the past, a comprehensive judgment, and even an organizing faculty, that did not exist to the same degree in the Dauphinese reformer.

Farel was not the only young Frenchman into whose mind the new light then beamed. The doctrines that fell from the lips of the illustrious doctor of Etaples fermented among the crowd who listened to his lectures, and in his school were trained the daring soldiers who, in the hour of battle, were to contend even to the foot of the scaffold. They listened, compared, discussed, and keenly argued on both sides. It is probable that among the small number of scholars who defended the truth was young Peter Robert Olivetan, born at Noyon about the close of the fifteenth century, who afterwards translated the Bible into French from Lefevre's version, and who seems to have been the first to draw the attention of a youth of his family, also a native of Noyon, to the Gospel, and who became the most illustrious chief of the Reformation.

Thus in 1512, at a time when Luther had made no impression on the world, and was going to Rome on some trifling monkish business,—at an epoch when Zwingle had not yet begun to apply himself earnestly to sacred learning, and was crossing the Alps with the confederates to fight for the pope,—Paris and France were listening to the teaching of those vital truths from which the Reformation was ordained to issue; and souls prepared to disseminate them were drinking them in with holy thirst. Hence Theodore Beza, speaking of Lefevre, hails him as the man "who boldly began the revival of the pure religion of Jesus Christ;" and remarks that, "as in ancient times the school of Isocrates sent forth the best orators, so from the lecture-room of the doctor of Etaples issued many of the best men of the age and of the Church."

The Reformation was not, therefore, in France a foreign importation. It was born on French soil; it germinated in Paris; it put forth its first shoots in the university itself, that second authority in Romish Christendom. God planted the seeds of this work in the simple hearts of a Picard and a Dauphinese, before they had begun to bud forth in any other country upon earth. The Swiss Reformation, as we have seen, was independent of the German Reformation; and in its turn the Reformation in France was independent of that of Switzerland and of Germany. The work commenced at the same time in different countries, without any communication one

with the other; as in a battle all the divisions begin to move at the same moment, although one has not told the other to march, but because one and the same command, issuing from a higher power, has been heard by all. The time had come, the nations were prepared, and God was everywhere beginning the revival of his Church at the same time. Such facts demonstrate that the great revolution of the sixteenth century was a work of God.

If we look only to dates, we must acknowledge that neither to Switzerland nor to Germany belongs the honour of having begun this work, although, hitherto, these two countries alone have contended for it. This honour belongs to France. This is a truth, a fact that we are anxious to establish, because until now it may possibly have been overlooked. Without dwelling on the influence that Lefevre exercised directly or indirectly on many individuals, and in particular on Calvin himself, as we conjecture, let us reflect on that which he had on one only of his disciples,—on Farel, and on the energetic activity which this servant of God manifested ever afterwards.

Can we, after that, resist the conviction, that if Zwingle and Luther had never appeared, there would still have been a reforming movement in France? It is impossible, no doubt, to calculate what might have been its extent; we must even acknowledge that the report of what was taking place on the other side of the Rhine and the Jura afterwards animated and accelerated the progress of the French reformers. But they were the first awakened by the trumpet that sounded from heaven in the sixteenth century, and they were the first on foot and under arms upon the field of battle.

Nevertheless Luther is the great workman of the sixteenth century, and in the fullest sense the first reformer. Lefevre is not so complete as Calvin, Farel, and Luther. He is of Wittenberg and Geneva, but there is still a tinge of the Sorbonne; he is the first catholic in the reform movement, and the last of the reformers in the catholic movement. He is to the end a sort of go-between, a mediator not altogether free from mystery, destined to remind us of the connection between the old things and the new, which seemed for ever separated by an impassable gulf. Though rejected and persecuted by Rome, he still clings to Rome by a slender thread which he has no desire to break. Lefevre of Etaples has a station apart in the theology of the sixteenth century: he is the link connecting the ancient times with the modern, and the man in whom the transition is made from the theology of the middle ages to the theology of the Reformation.

CHAPTER 4

Character of Francis I—Commencement of Modern Times—Liberty and Obedience—Margaret of Valois—The Court—Briconnet, Count of Montbrun—Lefevre commends him to the Bible—Francis I and "his Children"—The Gospel brought to Margaret—Conversion—Adoration—Margaret's Character

Thus the whole university was in a state of restlessness. But the Reformation in France was not to be a work of the learned only. It was to take its place among the great ones of the world, and even in the court of the sovereign.

The youthful Francis I of Angouleme had succeeded his fatherin-law and cousin Louis XII. His beauty and address, his courage and love of pleasure, made him the first knight of his time. He aspired, however, at being something more; he desired to be a great and even a good king, provided everything would bend to his sovereign pleasure. Valor, a taste for letters, and a love of gallantry, are three terms that will express the character of Francis and the spirit of his age. Two other illustrious kings, Henry IV and especially Louis XIV, presented the same features in after-years. But these princes wanted what the Gospel communicates; and although there had always existed in the nation elements of holiness and christian elevation we may say that these three great monarchs of modern France have in some measure stamped upon their subjects the impress of their own peculiarities, or rather that they themselves were the faithful images of the character of their people. If the Gospel had entered France with the most illustrious of the Valois family, it would have brought the nation what it does not possess,—a spiritual tendency, a christian holiness, a knowledge of divine things, and would thus have perfected it in what constituted the real strength and greatness of a people.

It was in the reign of Francis I that France and Europe passed from the middle ages to modern times. The new world, which was then in the bud, grew up and entered into possession. Two classes of men imposed their influence on the new state of society. On the one hand were the men of faith, men also of wisdom and holiness; and by their side were the courtly writers, friends of the world and of vice, who by the freedom of their principles contributed as much to the depravation of morals as the former to their reformation.

If Europe in the days of Francis I had not witnessed the rise of the reformers, and had been handed over by the severe judgment of Providence to the unbelieving innovators, her fate and that of Christianity would have been decided. The danger was great. For Sometime these two classes of combatants, the antagonists of the pope

and the opponents of the Gospel, were mixed up together; and as they both claimed liberty, they appeared to employ the same arms against the same enemies. An unpracticed eye could not distinguish between them amid the dust and clouds of the battle-field. If the former had allowed themselves to be carried away by the latter, all would have been lost. The enemies of the hierarchy were passing rapidly to the extremes of impiety, and pushing christian society into a frightful abyss; the papacy itself was helping towards this terrible catastrophe, and accelerating by its ambition and its disorders the destruction of the remnants of truth and life still surviving in the Church. But God raised up the Reformation, and Christianity was saved. The reformers who had shouted liberty, soon called for obedience. The very men who had cast down the throne whence the Roman pontiff issued his oracles, fell prostrate before the Word of God. Then a clear and definite separation took place; nay more, the two bodies engaged in war against each other. The one party had desired liberty only for themselves, the others had claimed it for the Word of God. The Reformation became the most formidable enemy of that incredulity towards which Rome is often so lenient. After restoring liberty to the Church, the reformers restored religion to the world. Of these two gifts, the latter was the most needed.

The friends of infidelity hoped, for a while, to reckon among their number Margaret of Valois, duchess of Alencon, whom Francis tenderly loved, and always called "sa mignonne," his darling, as we learn from Brantome. The same tastes, the same acquirements, distinguished both brother and sister. Possessing, like Francis, a handsome person,

Margaret combined with those eminent qualities that make great [443] characters those gentler virtues that win the affections. In the world, in the gay entertainments at the court of the king and of the emperor, she shone like a queen, charming, surprising, and captivating all hearts. Passionately fond of letters, and endowed with a rare genius, she would retire to her closet, and there indulge in the sweet pleasures of thought, study, and learning. But her ruling passion was to do good and prevent evil. When ambassadors had been received by the king, they went and paid their respects to Margaret. "They were mightily enchanted with her," says Brantome, "and made a glowing report of her to their own countrymen." And the king would often refer matters of importance to her, "leaving them solely to her decision."

This celebrated princess was distinguished for the strictness of her morals; but while many confine this strictness to their lips, and are lax in their behaviour, Margaret did the contrary. Irreproachable in conduct, she was not altogether free from censure in her writings. Instead of being surprised at this, we might rather wonder that a woman so dissolute as Louisa of Savoy should have a daughter so pure

as Margaret. While visiting different parts of the country with the court, she amused herself with describing the manners of the time, and particularly the disorders of the priests and monks. "I have heard her," says Brantome, "thus narrating tales to my grandmother, who always accompanied her in her litter, as lady-in-waiting, and who had charge of her inkhorn."

This Margaret, so beautiful, so full of wit, and living in the atmosphere of a corrupted court, was one of the first to be carried away by the religious movement then beginning in France. But how could the Duchess of Alencon be reached by the Reformation in the midst of so profane a court, and of the licentious tales by which it was amused? Her elevated soul felt wants that the Gospel alone could satisfy; grace works everywhere; and Christianity, which even before an apostle had appeared in Rome already counted followers in the house of Narcissus and in the court of Nero, penetrated rapidly, at the period of its renovation, into the court of Francis I. High-bred dames and noble lords addressed the princess in the language of faith; and that sun, then rising upon France, shed its earliest beams upon an illustrious head, by which they were immediately reflected on the Duchess of Alencon.

Among the most distinguished noblemen at the court was William of Montbrun, son of Cardinal Briconnet of St. Malo, who had entered the church after the decease of his wife. Count William, who was fond of study, took holy orders, and became successively bishop of Lodeve and of Meaux. Being twice sent ambassador to Rome, he returned to Paris, unseduced by the flattery and pomps of Leo X.

At the period of his return to France, the sap was everywhere beginning to move. Farel, then master of arts, was lecturing in the celebrated college of the Cardinal Lemoine, one of the four principal colleges of the theological faculty in Paris, equal in rank to the Sorbonne. Two fellow-countrymen of Lefevre, Arnaud and Gerard Roussel, with several others, increased the circle of liberal and generous minds. Briconnet, fresh from the gay entertainments and festivities of Rome, was astonished at what had taken place in Paris during his absence. Thirsting for the truth, he renewed his ancient relations with Lefevre, and passed many precious hours with the doctor of the Sorbonne, with Farel, the two Roussels and their friends. This illustrious but humble-minded prelate was willing to be instructed by the lowliest Christians, but particularly by the Lord himself. "I am in darkness," said he, "awaiting the grace of the Divine benevolence, from which I am exiled by my demerits." His mind was dazzled, as it were, by the brilliancy of the Gospel. His eyelids drooped before its unequalled brightness. "The eyes of all men," added he, "are insufficient to receive the whole light of this great luminary."

Lefevre had recommended the bishop to the Bible; he had pointed to it as the clue which ever leads men back to the primitive truth of Christianity,—to what it was when schools, sects, ordinances, and traditions were unknown, and as the powerful medium by which the religion of Jesus Christ is renovated. Briconnet read the Bible. "Such is the sweetness of this Divine food," said he, "that it makes the mind insatiable; the more we taste of it, the more we long for it." The simple and mighty truth of salvation charmed him: he found Christ,—he found God himself. "What vessel," said he, "is able to receive the exceeding fullness of this inexhaustible sweetness? But the dwelling extends to our desire to entertain the good guest. Faith is the quartermaster who alone can find room for him, or, more truly, who makes us dwell in him." But at the same time the good bishop, afflicted at seeing this doctrine of life, which the Reformation restored to the world, held in so little estimation at court, in the city, and among the people, exclaimed: "Oh singular and most [444] worthy innovation, and yet to my fellow-men most unacceptable!"

It is in this way that evangelical opinions made their way into the midst of the frivolous, dissolute, and literary court of Francis I.Many of the men who composed it, and who enjoyed the entire confidence of the king, as John du Bellay, Budaeus, Cop the court physician, and even Petit the king's confessor, appeared favourably disposed towards the sentiments of Briconnet and Lefevre. Francis, who loved learning, who invited into his states learned men inclined to Lutheranism, and who thought (as Erasmus says) "in this manner to adorn and illustrate his age in a more magnificent manner than he could have done by trophies, pyramids, or by the most pompous structures," was himself carried away by his sister, by Briconnet, and by the literary men of his court and universities. He would often be present at the discussion of the learned, listening with delight to their conversation at table, and calling them "his children." He prepared the way for the Word of God by founding Hebrew and Greek professorships. And hence Theodore Beza, when placing his portrait at the head of the reformers, says: "Pious spectator! do not shudder at the sight of this adversary! Ought he not to have a part in this honour, who expelled barbarism from the world, and with firm hand substituted in its stead three languages and sound learning, to be as it were the portals to the new building that was shortly to be erected?"

But there was at the court of Francis I one soul in particular, which seemed prepared to receive the evangelical influence of the doctor of Etaples and the bishop of Meaux. Margaret, yet hesitating and wavering, in the midst of the depraved society that surrounded her, looked for support, and found it in the Gospel. She turned towards this fresh breath that was reanimating the world, and inhaled it with delight as an emanation from heaven. From some of the ladies of her court she learnt what the new doctors were teaching; they lent her their writings, their little books, called

in the language of the time, "tracts;" and spoke to her of the "primitive Church, of the pure Word of God, of worshipping in spirit and in truth, of christian liberty which shakes off the yoke of superstition and traditions of men to bind them closer to God alone." Erelong this princess conversed with Lefevre, Farel, and Roussel; their zeal, their piety, their purity of morals,—all in them struck her imagination; but it was the Bishop of Meaux in particular, who had long enjoyed her friendship, that became her guide in the path of faith.

Thus, in the midst of the brilliant court of Francis I and of the profligate household of Louisa of Savoy, was accomplished one of those conversions of the heart which although not thoroughly evangelical, are not the fruit of a mere aesthetical religion. Margaret subsequently recorded in her poems the different movements of her soul at this important period of her life; and in them we may trace the path she then trod. We find that the sense of sin had taken strong hold of her, and that she wept over the levity with which she had treated the scandals of the world. She exclaimed: Is there a gulf of ill, so deep and wide That can suffice but e'en a tenth to hide Of my vile sins?

This corruption, of which she had so long been ignorant, she discovered everywhere, now that her eyes were opened. Well do I feel within me is the root, Without are branch and foliage, flower and fruit.

Yet amidst the alarm caused by the state of her soul, she felt that a God of peace had appeared to her: My God, thou hast come down on earth to me,—To me, although a naked worm I be. And erelong a sense of the love of God in Christ was shed abroad in her heart.

Margaret had found faith, and her enraptured soul indulged in holy transports. Word Divine, Jesus the Salvator, Only Son of the eternal Pater, The first, the last; of all things renovator, Bishop and king, and mighty triumphator, From death by death our liberator. By faith we're made the sons of the Creator.

From this time a great change took place in the Duchess of Alencon:—Though poor, and weak, and ignorant I be How rich, how strong, how wise I am in Thee! But the power of sin was not yet subdued in her. She found a struggle, a discord in her soul that alarmed her:—In spirit noble,— but in nature slave; Immortal am I,—tending to the grave; Essence of heaven,—and yet of earthly birth; God's dwelling place,—and yet how little worth.

Margaret, seeking in nature the symbols that might express the wants and affections of her soul, chose for her emblem (says Brantome) the marigold, "which by its rays and leaves, has more affinity with the sun, and turns wherever he goes."— She added this device:— Non inferiora secutus, I seek not things below, "as a sign," adds the courtly writer, "that she directed all her [445] actions, thoughts, desires, and affections, to that great sun which is God; and hence she was suspected of being attached to the Lutheran religion."

In fact the princess experienced, not long after, the truth of the saying, that all who will live godly in Jesus Christ shall suffer persecution. At the court, they talked of Margaret's new opinions, and the surprise was great. What! even the sister of the king takes part with these people! For a moment it might have been thought that Margaret's ruin was certain. She was denounced to Francis I. But the king, who was tenderly attached to his sister, pretended to think that it was untrue. Margaret's character gradually lessened the opposition. Every one loved her, says Brantome: "she was very kind, mild, gracious, charitable, affable, a great alms-giver, despising nobody, and winning all hearts by her excellent qualities."

In the midst of the corruption and frivolity of that age, the mind reposes with delight on this chosen soul, which the grace of God had seized beneath such a load of vanities and grandeur. But her feminine character held her back. If Francis I had felt his sister's convictions, he would no doubt have followed them out. The timid heart of the princess trembled before the anger of the king. She was constantly wavering between her brother and her Saviour, and could not resolve to sacrifice either. We cannot recognise her as a Christian who has reached the perfect liberty of the children of God: she is a correct type of those elevated souls, so numerous in every age, particularly among women, who, powerfully attracted towards heaven, have not sufficient strength to detach themselves entirely from the earth.

However, such as she is, she is a pleasing character on the stage of history. Neither Germany nor England present her parallel. She is a star, slightly clouded no doubt, but shedding an indescribable and gentle radiance, and at the time of which I am treating her rays shone out still more brightly. It is not until later years, when the angry looks of Francis I denounce a mortal hatred against the Reformation, that his frightened sister will screen her holy faith from the light of day. But now she raises her head in the midst of this corrupted court, and appears a bride of Christ. The respect paid to her, the high opinion entertained of her understanding and of her heart, plead the cause of the Gospel at the court of France much better than any preacher could have done. The gentle influence of woman gained admission for the new doctrine. It is perhaps to this period we should trace the inclination of the French

nobility to embrace Protestantism. If Francis had followed his sister, if all the nation had opened its gates to Christianity, Margaret's conversion might have been the saving of France. But while the nobles welcomed the Gospel, the king and the people remained faithful to Rome; and there came a time when it was a cause of serious misfortune to the Reformation to count a Navarre and a Conde among its ranks.

CHAPTER 5

Enemies of the Reformation—Louisa—Duprat—Concordat of Bologna—Opposition of the Parliament and the University—The Sorbonne—Beda—His Character—His Tyranny—Berquin, the most learned of the Nobility—The Intriguers of the Sorbonne—Heresy of the three Magdalens—Luther condemned at Paris—Address of the Sorbonne to the King—Lefevre quits Paris for Meaux

Thus already had the Gospel made illustrious conquests in France. Lefevre, Briconnet, Farel, and Margaret joyfully yielded in Paris to the movement that was already beginning to shake the world. Francis I himself seemed at that time more attracted by the splendour of literature, than repelled by the severity of the Gospel. The friends of the Word of God were entertaining the most pleasing expectations; they thought that the heavenly doctrine would be disseminated without obstacle over their country, at the very moment when a formidable opposition was organizing at court and in the Sorbonne. France, which was to signalise itself among Roman-catholic states for nearly three centuries by its persecutions, rose with pitiless severity against the Reformation. If the seventeenth century was the age of a bloody victory, the sixteenth was that of a cruel struggle. Probably in no place did the reformed Christians meet with more merciless adversaries on the very spot where they raised the standard of the Gospel. In Germany, it was in the Romish states that their enemies were found; in Switzerland, in the Romish cantons; but in France, it was face to face. A dissolute woman and a rapacious minister then headed the long list of the enemies of the Reformation.

Louisa of Savoy, mother of the king and of Margaret, notorious for her gallantries, absolute in her will, and surrounded by a train of ladies of honour whose licentiousness began at the court of France a long series of immorality and scandal, naturally took part against the Word of God; she was the more to be feared as she had always preserved an almost unbounded influence over her son. But the Gospel met with a still more formidable adversary in Louisa's favourite, Anthony Duprat, who was nominated chancellor of the kingdom by her influence. This man, whom a contemporary historian calls the most vicious of all bipeds, was more rapacious than Louisa was dissolute. Having first enriched himself at the expense of justice, he desired subsequently to increase his wealth at the expense of religion, and entered holy orders to gain possession of the richest livings.

Lust and avarice thus characterized these two persons, who, being both devoted to the pope, endeavoured to conceal the disorders of their lives by the blood of the heretics. One of their acts was to deliver up the kingdom to the ecclesiastical dominion

of the pope. The king, after the battle of Marignan, met Leo X at Bologna, and there was sealed the famous concordat, in virtue of which these two princes divided the spoils of the Church between them. They annulled the supremacy of councils to give it to the pope; and depriving the churches of their right to fill up the vacant bishoprics and livings, conferred it on the king. After this, Francis I, supporting the pontiff's train, proceeded to the minsterchurch of Bologna to ratify this negotiation. He was sensible of the injustice of the concordat, and turning to Duprat, whispered in his ear: "It is enough to damn us both." But what was salvation to him? Money and the pope's alliance were what he wanted.

The parliament vigorously resisted the concordat. The king made its deputies wait several weeks at Amboise, and then calling them before him one day, as he rose from table, he said: "There is a king in France, and I will not have a Venetian senate formed in my dominions." He then commanded them to depart before sunset. Evangelical liberty had nothing to hope from such a prince. Three days after, the high-chamberlain La Tremouille appeared in parliament, and ordered the concordat to be registered.

Upon this the university put itself in motion. On the 18th of March 1518, a solemn procession, at which all the students and the bachelors with their hoods were present, repaired to the church of Saint Catherine of the Scholars, to implore God to preserve the liberties of the Church and of the kingdom. "The colleges were closed, strong bodies of the students went armed through the city, threatening and sometimes maltreating the exalted personages who were publishing and carrying out the said concordat by the king's orders." The university eventually tolerated the execution of this edict; but without revoking the resolutions on which it had declared its opposition; and from that time, says the Venetian ambassador Correro, "the king began to give away the bishoprics with a liberal hand at the solicitation of the court ladies, and to bestow abbeys on his soldiers; so that at the court of France a trade was carried on in bishoprics and abbeys, as at Venice in pepper and cinnamon."

While Louisa and Duprat were preparing to destroy the Gospel by the destruction of the liberties of the Gallican Church, a fanatical and powerful party was forming against the Bible. Christian truth has always had to encounter two powerful adversaries, the depravity of the world and the fanaticism of the priests. The scholastic Sorbonne and a profligate court were now to march forward hand in hand against the confessors of Jesus Christ. In the early days of the Church the unbelieving Sadducees and the hypocritical Pharisees were the fiercest enemies of Christianity; and so they have remained through every age. Erelong from the darkness of the schools emerged the most pitiless adversaries of the Gospel. At their head was Noel

Bedier, commonly called Beda, a native of Picardy and syndic of the Sorbonne, reputed to be the greatest brawler and most factious spirit of his day. Educated in the dry maxims of scholasticism, matured in the theses and antitheses of the Sorbonne, having a greater veneration for the distinctions of the school than for the Word of God, he was transported with anger against those whose daring mouths ventured to put forth other doctrines.

Of a restless disposition, unable to enjoy any repose, always requiring new pursuits, he was a torment to all around him; confusion was his native element; he seemed born for contention; and when he had no adversaries he fell foul of his friends. This impetuous quack filled the university with stupid and violent declamations against literature, against the innovations of the age, and against all those who were not, in his opinion, sufficiently earnest in repressing them. Many smiled as they listened to him, but others gave credit to the invectives of the blustering orator, and the violence of his character secured him a tyrannical sway in the Sorbonne. He must always have some new enemy to fight, some victim to drag to the scaffold; and accordingly he had created heretics before any existed, and had called for the burning of Merlin, vicar-general of Paris, for having endeavoured to justify Origen. But when he saw the new doctors appear, he bounded like a wild beast that suddenly perceives an easy prey within its reach. "There are three thousand monks in one Beda," said the cautious Erasmus.

These excesses, however, were prejudicial to his cause. "What!" said the wisest men of the age, "does the Roman Church rest on the shoulders of such an Atlas as this? Whence comes all this disturbance, except from the absurdities of Beda himself?" In effect, the very invectives that frightened weak minds, disgusted more generous spirits. At the court of Francis I was a gentleman of Artois, named Louis de Berquin, then about thirty years of age, and who was never married. The purity of his life, his profound knowledge, which procured him the title of "the most learned of the nobles," the openness of his disposition his tender care for the poor, and his unbounded attachment to his friends, distinguished him above his equals. There was not a more devout observer of the ceremonies of the Church, fasts, festivals, and masses; and he held in the greatest horror all that was denominated heretical. It was a matter of astonishment to witness so much devotion at court.

It seemed as if nothing could make such a man incline to the side of the Reformation; there were, however, one of two features in his character that might lead him to the Gospel. He abhorred every kind of dissimulation, and as he never desired to injure anyone himself, he could not bear to see others injured. The tyranny of Beda and other fanatics, their bickerings and persecutions, filled his generous soul

with indignation; and as he never did things by halves, he was accustomed wherever he went, in the city or at the court, "even among the highest personages in the kingdom," to inveigh with the utmost vehemence against the tyranny of these doctors, and attack, "in their very nests," says Theodore Beza, "those odious hornets who were then the terror of the world."

He did not stop here: opposition to injustice led Berquin to inquire after truth. He desired to know that holy Scripture, so dear to the men against whom Beda and his creatures were raging; and he had scarcely begun to read the book, before it won his heart. Berquin immediately joined Margaret, Lefevre, Briconnet, and all those who loved the Word, and in their society tasted of the purest joys. He felt that he had something more to do besides opposing the Sorbonne, and would have loved to communicate the convictions of his soul to all France. He immediately began to write and translate several christian books into French. It seemed to him that every man ought to acknowledge and embrace the truth as promptly as he had done himself. That impetuosity which Beda had exerted in the service of human tradition, Berquin employed in the service of the Word of God. Although younger than the syndic of the Sorbonne, less prudent, and less skilful, he had in his favour the noble enthusiasm of truth. They were two strong wrestlers about to try which should throw the other. But Berquin had another object in view than a triumph over Beda: he would have desired to pour forth floods of truth over all his countrymen. And hence Theodore Beza says, that France might have found a second Luther in Berquin, if he had found a second elector in Francis I.

Numerous obstacles were destined to impede his efforts. Fanaticism finds disciples everywhere; it is a fire that spreads far and near. The monks and ignorant priests took part with the syndic of the Sorbonne. A party-spirit pervaded the whole troop, which was governed by a few intriguing and fanatical leaders, who cleverly took advantage of the insignificance or vanity of their colleagues, to infect them with their own prejudices. At all their meetings these chiefs were the only speakers: they domineered over their party by their violence, and reduced the moderate and weak-minded to silence. Hardly had they made any proposition, before these ringleaders exclaimed: "We shall soon see now who are of the Lutheran faction." Did anyone give utterance to a reasonable sentiment, a shuddering fell upon Beda, Lecouturier, Duchesne, and the whole band; and all cried out at once: "He is worse than Luther." This manoeuvre was successful; the timid minds that prefer peace to disputation, those who are ready to give up their own opinions for their own advantage, those who do not understand the simplest questions, and, lastly, those who are always carried away by the clamour of others,—all became the willing recruits of Beda and his satellites. Some were silent, others shouted, all submitted to that influence which a

proud and tyrannical mind exercises over vulgar souls. Such was the state of this association, which was regarded as so venerable, and which was at that time the most violent enemy of evangelical Christianity. It would often be sufficient to cast a single glance upon the most celebrated bodies to estimate at its just value the war they wage upon truth.

Thus the university which, under Louis XII, had applauded Allmain's aspirations after independence, abruptly plunged once more, under Duprat and Louisa of Savoy, into fanaticism and servility. If we except the Jansenists and a few other doctors, a noble and real independence has never existed among the Gallican clergy. They have never done more than oscillate between servility to the court and servility to the pope. If under Louis XII or Louis XIV they had some appearance of liberty, it was because their master in Paris was at strife with their master at Rome. And thus we have an explanation of the change we have pointed out.

The university and the bishops forgot their rights and duties as soon as the king ceased to enjoin their observance. For a long period Beda had been incensed against Lefevre; the renown of the Picard doctor's lectures irritated his compatriot and ruffled his pride; he would gladly have silenced him. Once already Beda had attacked the doctor of Etaples, and as yet little able to distinguish the evangelical doctrines, he had assailed his colleague on a point which, however strange it may appear, was near sending Lefevre to the scaffold. This doctor had asserted that Mary, the sister of Lazarus, Mary Magdalen, and the "woman which was a sinner," of whom Saint Luke speaks in the seventh Chapter of his Gospel, were three distinct persons. The Greek fathers had distinguished them: the Latin fathers had confounded them together. This terrible heresy of the three Magdalens set Beda and all his host in motion; Christendom was roused; Fisher, bishop of Rochester, one of the most distinguished prelates of the age, wrote against Lefevre, and the whole Church then declared against an opinion now admitted by every Roman-catholic. Already Lefevre, condemned by the Sorbonne, was prosecuted by the parliament as a heretic, when Francis I, pleased at the opportunity of striking a blow at the Sorbonne and of humbling the monks, rescued him from the hands of his persecutors.

Beda, enraged at seeing his victim snatched from his grasp, resolved to take better aim another time. The name of Luther was beginning to be heard in France. The reformer, after the dispute with Dr. Eck at Leipsic, had agreed to acknowledge the universities of Erfurth and Paris as his judges. The zeal displayed by the latter university against the concordat, no doubt led him to hope that he should find impartial judges in its members. But the times were changed, and the more decided the theological faculty had been against the encroachments of Rome, the more it was

bent on showing its orthodoxy. Beda accordingly found it quite disposed to enter into his views.

On the 20th of January 1520, the treasurer of the French nation bought twenty copies of the conference between Luther and Eck for distribution among the members of the commission who were to make a report on the matter. More than a year was employed in this investigation. The German Reformation was beginning to create a strong sensation in France. The universities, which were then truly catholic institutions, to which students resorted from every country in Christendom, brought Germany, France, Switzerland, and England, into closer and speedier relation with each other, as regards theology and philosophy, than those of the present day. The reports prevailing in Paris of Luther's success strengthened the hands of such men as Lefevre, Briconnet, and Farel. Each of his victories increased their courage. Many of the Sorbonne doctors were struck by the admirable truths they found in the writings of the Wittenberg monk. There had already been many a bold confession; but there had also been a terrible resistance. "All Europe," says Crevier, "was waiting for the decision of the university of Paris." The contest appeared doubtful. At length Beda prevailed; and in April 1521, the university decreed that Luther's works should be publicly burnt, and the author compelled to retract.

This was not enough. In fact Luther's disciples had crossed the Rhine more speedily even than his writings. "In a short time," says the Jesuit Maimbourg, "the university was filled with foreigners, who, because they knew a little Hebrew and more Greek, acquired a reputation, insinuated themselves into the houses of persons of quality, and claimed an insolent liberty of interpreting the Bible." The faculty, therefore, appointed a deputation to bear their remonstrances to the king.

Francis I, caring little for the quarrels of theologians, was continuing his career of pleasure; and passing from castle to castle, with his gentlemen and the ladies composing his mother's and his sister's court, he indulged in every species of disorder, far from the troublesome observation of the citizens of the capital. He thus made his progresses through Brittany, Anjou, Guienne, Angoumois, and Poitou, leading the same sumptuous life in villages and forests, as if he had been at Paris in his palace of Tournelles. It was one round of tournaments, sham-fights, masquerades, costly entertainments, and banquets, which even those of Lucullus (as Brantome says) could not equal.

For a moment, however, he interrupted the course of his pleasures to receive the grave deputies of the Sorbonne; but he saw only men of learning in those whom the faculty pointed out as heretics. Could a prince who boasted of having put the kings of

France hors de page (out of leading-strings), bend his head before a few fanatical doctors? He replied: "I will not have these people molested. To persecute those who teach us, would prevent able scholars from coming into our country."

The deputation left the king's presence in great wrath. What will be the consequence? The disease grows stronger every day; already the heretical opinions are denominated "the sentiments of men of genius;" the devouring flame is stealing into the most secret recesses; erelong the conflagration will burst forth, and throughout France the edifice of faith will fall with a terrible crash.

Beda and his party, failing to obtain the king's permission to erect their scaffolds, resort to persecutions of a more invidious nature. There was no kind of annoyance to which the evangelical teachers were not subjected. Fresh reports and fresh denunciations followed each other daily. The aged Lefevre, tormented by these ignorant zealots, longed for repose. The pious Briconnet, who was unremitting in his veneration for the doctor of Etaples, offered him an asylum. Lefevre quitted Paris and retired to Meaux. This was the first victory gained over the Gospel, and it was then seen that if the Romish party cannot succeed in engaging the civil power on its side, there is a secret and fanatical police, by means of which it is enabled to obtain its end.

CHAPTER 6

Briconnet visits his Diocese—Reform—The Doctors persecuted in Paris—Philiberta of Savoy—Correspondence between Margaret and Briconnet

Thus Paris was beginning to rise against the Reformation, and to trace the outlines of that circumvallation which was destined for more than three centuries to bar the entrance of the reformed worship. It had been God's will that the first beams of light should shine upon the capital; but men immediately arose to extinguish them; the spirit of the Sixteen was already fermenting in the metropolis, and other cities were about to receive the light which Paris rejected.

Briconnet, on returning to his diocese, had manifested the zeal of a Christian and of a bishop. He had visited every parish, and, assembling the deans, the incumbents, and their curates, with the churchwardens and principal parishioners, had inquired into the doctrine and lives of the preachers. At collection time (they answered) the Franciscans of Meaux begin their rounds; a single preacher will visit four or five parishes in a day, always delivering the same sermon, not to feed the souls of his hearers, but to fill his belly, his purse, and his convent. Their wallets once replenished, their end is gained, the sermons are over, and the monks do not appear again in the churches until the time for another collection has arrived. The only business of these shepherds is to shear their sheep.

The majority of the parish priests spent their stipends at Paris. "Alas!" exclaimed the pious bishop, finding a presbytery deserted that he had gone to visit, "are they not traitors who thus desert the service of Jesus Christ?" Briconnet resolved to apply a remedy to these evils, and convoked a synod of all his clergy for the 13th of October 1519. But these worldly priests, who troubled themselves but little about the remonstrances of their bishop, and for whom Paris had so many charms, took advantage of a custom in virtue of which they might substitute one or more curates to tend their flocks in their absence. Out of one hundred and twenty-seven of these curates, there were only fourteen of whom Briconnet could approve upon examination.

Worldly-minded priests, imbecile curates, monks who thought only of their belly;—such was then the condition of the Church. Briconnet interdicted the Franciscans from entering the pulpit; published a mandate on the 27th of October 1520, in which he declared "traitors and deserters all those pastors who, by abandoning their flocks, show plainly that what they love is their fleece and their wool; selected others who were found to be capable, and gave them to the poor sheep, ransomed by the most holy blood of Jesus Christ;" and feeling convinced that the only

means of providing able ministers for his diocese was to train them himself, he determined to establish a theological school at Meaux, under the direction of pious and learned doctors. It was necessary to find them, and Beda soon provided them.

This fanatic and his band did not relax their exertions; and, bitterly complaining of the toleration of their government, declared that they would make war on the new doctrines with it, without it, and against it. In vain had Lefevre quitted the capital; did not Farel and his friends remain behind? Farel, it is true, did not preach, for he was not in holy orders; but at the university and in the city, with professors and priests, students and citizens, he boldly maintained the cause of the Reformation. Others, inspirited by his example, were inculcating the Gospel more openly. A celebrated preacher, Martial Mazurier, president of St. Michael's college, threw aside all reserve, depicted the disorders of the age in the darkest and yet truest colours, and it seemed impossible to resist the torrent of his eloquence. The anger of Beda and his theological friends was at its height. "If we tolerate these innovators," said he, "they will invade the whole body, and all will be over with our teaching, our traditions, our places, and the respect felt towards us by France and the whole of Christendom!"

The divines of the Sorbonne were the stronger party. Farel, Mazurier, Gerard Roussel, and his brother Arnold, soon found their active exertions everywhere thwarted. The Bishop of Meaux entreated his friends to come and join Lefevre; and these excellent men, hunted down by the Sorbonne, and hoping to form, under Briconnet's protection, a sacred phalanx for the triumph of the truth, accepted the bishop's invitation, and repaired to Meaux. Thus the light of the Gospel was gradually withdrawn form the capital, where Providence had kindled its earliest sparks. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. It is impossible not to discover that Paris then drew down upon its walls the judgment of God pointed out in these words of Jesus Christ.

Margaret of Valois, successively deprived of Briconnet, Lefevre, and their friends, felt anxious at her lonely position in the midst of Paris and the licentious court of Francis I. A young princess, Philiberta of Savoy, her mother's sister, lived in close intimacy with her. Philiberta, whom the King of France had given in marriage to Julian the Magnificent, brother to Leo X, in confirmation of the concordat, had repaired to Rome after her nuptials, when the pope, delighted at so illustrious an alliance, had expended 150,000 ducats in sumptuous festivities on the occasion. Julian, who then commanded the papal army, died, leaving his widow only eighteen years of age. She became attached to Margaret, who by her talents and virtues exercised a great influence over all around her. Philiberta's grief opened her heart to

the voice of religion. Margaret imparted to her all she read; and the widow of the lieutenant-general of the Church began to taste the sweets of the doctrine of salvation. But Philiberta was too inexperienced to support her friend. Margaret often trembled as she thought of her exceeding weakness. If the love she bore the king and the fear she had of displeasing him led her to any action contrary to her conscience, trouble immediately entered into her soul, and turning sorrowfully towards the Lord, she found in him a brother and a master more compassionate and dearer to her than Francis himself. It was then she said to Jesus Christ:—Sweet brother, who, when thou might'st justly chide Thy foolish sister, tak'st her to thy side; And grace and love giv'st her in recompense Of murmurings, injury, and great offence. Too much, too much, dear brother, thou hast done, Too much, alas! for such a worthless one.

Margaret seeing all her friends retiring to Meaux, looked sadly after them from the midst of the festivities of the court. Everything appeared to be deserting her again. Her husband, the Duke of Alencon, was setting out for the army; her youthful aunt Philiberta was going to Savoy. The duchess turned to Briconnet.

"Monsieur de Meaux," wrote she, "knowing that One alone is necessary, I apply to you, entreating you to be, by prayer, the means that He will be pleased to guide according to His holy will, M. d'Alencon, who by command of the king is setting out as lieutenantgeneral in his army, which I fear will not be disbanded without a war. And thinking that, besides the public weal of the kingdom, you have a good title in whatsoever concerns his salvation and mine, I pray for your spiritual aid. Tomorrow, my aunt of Nemours departs for Savoy. I am obliged to meddle with many things that cause me much fear. Wherefore, if you should know that master Michael could undertake a journey hither, it would be a consolation to me, which I beseech only for the honour of God."

Michael of Aranda, whose aid Margaret sought, was a member of the evangelical society of Meaux, and who subsequently exposed himself to many dangers in preaching the Gospel.

This pious princess beheld with alarm the opposition against truth becoming more formidable every day. Duprat and the creatures of the government, Beda and those of the Sorbonne, filled her with terror. Briconnet, to encourage her, replied: "It is the war which the gentle Jesus told us in the Gospel he came to send on earth and also the fire the great fire that transformeth earthliness into heavenliness. I desire with all my heart to aid you, madam, but from my own nothingness expect nothing but the will. Whoso hath faith hope, and love, hath all he requires, and needeth not aid or support God alone is all in all, and out of him can nothing be found. To fight,

take with you that great giant love unspeakable The war is led on by love. Jesus demandeth the presence of the heart: wretched is the man who withdraws from him. Whoso fighteth in person is sure of victory. He often faileth who fighteth by others."

The Bishop of Meaux was beginning to know by personal experience what it is to fight for the Word of God. The theologians and monks, irritated by the asylum he gave to the friend of the Reformation, accused him with such violence that his brother, the Bishop of St. Malo, came to Paris to inquire into the matter. Hence Margaret was the more touched by the consolations that Briconnet addressed to her, and she replied with offers of assistance.

"If in anything," she wrote, "you think that I can pleasure you or yours, I pray you believe that every trouble will turn to my comfort. May everlasting peace be yours after these long wars you are waging for the faith, in which battle you desire to die Wholly your daughter, Margaret."

It is to be lamented that Briconnet did not die in the contest. Yet he was then full of zeal. Philiberta of Nemours, respected by all for her sincere devotion, her liberality towards the poor, and the great purity of her life, read with increasing interest the evangelical writings transmitted to her by the Bishop of Meaux. "I have all the tracts that you have sent me," wrote Margaret to Briconnet, "of which my aunt of Nemours has her part, and I will forward her the last; for she is in Savoy at her brother's wedding, which is no slight loss to me; wherefore I beseech you have pity on my loneliness." Unhappily Philiberta did not live long enough to declare herself openly in favour of the Reformation. She died in 1524 at the castle of Virieu le Grand, in Bugey, at the age of twenty-six. This was a severe blow to Margaret. Her friend, her sister, she who could fully comprehend her, was taken from her. There was perhaps only one individual, her brother, whose death would have occasioned her more sorrow than this: Such floods of tears fall from my eyes, They hide from view both earth and skies.

Margaret, feeling her inability to resist her grief and the seductions of the court, entreated Briconnet to exhort her to the love of God, and the humble bishop replied:—

"May the mild and gentle Jesus, who wills, and who alone is able to effect what he mightily will, in his infinite mercy visit your heart, exhorting you to love him with your whole being. Other than he, madam, none has the power to do this; you must not seek light from darkness, or warmth from cold. By attracting he kindles; and by warmth he attracts to follow him, enlarging the heart. Madam, you write to me to have pity on you, because you are alone. I do not understand that word. Whoso lives

in the world and has his heart there is alone; for many and evil go together. But she whose heart sleeps to the world, and is awake to the meek and gentle Jesus, her true and loyal husband, is truly alone, for she lives on the one thing needful; and yet she is not alone, not being forsaken by him who fills and preserves all things. Pity I cannot, and must not, such loneliness, which is more to be esteemed than the whole world, from which I am persuaded that the love of God had saved you, and that your are no longer its child Abide, madam, alone in your only One who has been pleased to suffer a painful and ignominious death and passion.

"Madam, in commending myself to your good graces, I entreat you not to use any more such words as in your last letters. Of God alone you are the daughter and bride: other father you should not seek I exhort and admonish you, that you will be such and as good a daughter to him, as he is a good Father to you and forasmuch as you cannot attain to this, because the finite cannot correspond to infinity, I pray that he will vouchsafe to increase your strength, that you may love and serve him with your whole heart."

Notwithstanding these exhortations, Margaret was not consoled. She bitterly regretted the spiritual guides whom she had lost; the new pastors forced upon her to bring her back did not possess her confidence and whatever the bishop might say, she felt herself alone in the midst of the court, and all around her appeared dark and desolate. "As a sheep in a strange country," wrote she to Briconnet, "wandering about, not knowing where to find its pasture, through lack of knowing its new shepherds, naturally lifts its head to catch the breeze from that quarter where the chief shepherd was once accustomed to give her sweet nourishment, in such sort am I constrained to pray for your charity Come down from the high mountain, and in pity regard, among this benighted people, the blindest of all thy fold. "Margaret."

The Bishop of Meaux, in his reply, taking up the image of the stray sheep under which Margaret had depicted herself, uses it to describe the mysteries of salvation under the figure of a wood: "The sheep entering the forest, led by the Holy Ghost," said he, "is immediately enchanted by the goodness, beauty, straightness, length, breadth, depth, and height, and the fragrant and invigorating sweetness of this forest and when it has looked all around, has seen only Him in all, and all in Him; and moving rapidly through its depths, finds it so pleasant, that the way is life, and joy, and consolation." The bishop then shows her the sheep searching in vain for the limits of the forest (an image of the soul that would fathom the mysteries of God), meeting with lofty mountains, which it endeavours to scale, finding everywhere "inaccessible and incomprehensible infinity." He [452] then teaches her the road by which the soul, inquiring after God, surmounts all these difficulties; he shows how the sheep in the

midst of the hirelings finds "the cabin of the great Shepherd," and "enters on the wing of meditation by faith;" all is made smooth, all is explained; and she begins to sing: "I have found him whom my soul loveth."

Thus wrote the Bishop of Meaux. At that period he was burning with zeal, and would gladly have seen all France regenerated by the Gospel. Often would his mind dwell especially on those three great individuals who seemed to preside over the destinies of its people,—the king, his mother, and his sister. He thought that if the royal family were enlightened, all the people would be so, and the priests, stirred to rivalry, would at last awaken from their lethargy. "Madam," wrote he to Margaret, "I humbly entreat Almighty God, that he will be pleased of his goodness to kindle a fire in the hearts of the king, of his mother, and in your own so that from you there may go forth a light burning and shining on the rest of the nation; and particularly that class by whose coldness all others are frozen." Margaret did not share these hopes. She speaks neither of her brother nor of her mother; they were subjects she dared not touch upon; but, replying to the bishop in January 1522, with a heart wrung by the indifference and worldliness of those around her, she said: "The times are so cold, my heart so icy;" and signs her letter, "your frozen, thirsty, and hungry daughter, "Margaret."

This letter did not discourage Briconnet, but it made him ponder; and feeling how much he, who desired to re-animate others, required to be animated himself, he commended himself to the prayers of Margaret and of Madam de Nemours. "Madam," wrote he, with great simplicity, "I beseech you to awaken the poor slumberer with your prayers."

Such in 1521 were the sentiments interchanged at the court of France. A strange correspondence, no doubt, and which, after more than three centuries, a manuscript in the Royal Library has revealed to us. Was this influence of the Reformation in such high places a benefit to it or a misfortune? The sting of truth penetrated the court; but perhaps it only served to arouse the drowsy beast, and exciting his rage, caused it to spring with deadlier fury on the humblest of the flock.

CHAPTER 7

Beginning of the Church at Meaux—The Scriptures in French—The Artisans and the Bishop—Evangelical Harvest—The Epistles of St. Paul sent to the King—Lefevre and Roma—The Monks before the Bishop—The Monks before the Parliament—Briconnet gives way

The time was indeed approaching when the storm should burst upon the Reformation; but it was first to scatter a few more seeds and to gather in a few more sheaves. This city of Meaux, renowned a century and a half later by the sublime defender of the Gallican system against the autocratic pretensions of Rome, was called to be the first town of France where regenerated Christianity should establish its dominion. It was then the field on which the labourers were prodigal of their exertions and their seed, and where already the ears were falling before the reapers. Briconnet, less sunk in slumber than he had said, was animating, inspecting, and directing all. His fortune equalled his zeal; never did man devote his wealth to nobler uses, and never did such noble devotedness promise at first to bear such glorious fruits. The most pious teachers, transferred from Paris to Meaux, from that time acted with more liberty. There was freedom of speech, and great was the stride then taken by the Reformation in France. Lefevre energetically expounded that Gospel with which he would have rejoiced to fill the world. He exclaimed: "Kings, princes, nobles, people, all nations should think and aspire after Christ alone. Every priest should resemble that archangel whom John saw in the Apocalypse, flying through the air, holding the everlasting Gospel in his hand, and carrying it to every people, nation, tongue, and king. Come near ye pontiffs, come ye kings, come ye generous hearts! Nations, awake to the light of the Gospel, and inhale the heavenly life. The Word of God is all-sufficient."

Such in truth was the motto of that school: The Word of God is All-Sufficient. In this device the whole Reformation is embodied. "To know Christ and his Word," said Lefevre, Roussel, and Farel, "is the only living and universal theology He who knows that, knows everything."

The truth was making a deep impression at Meaux. Private meetings took place at first; then conferences; and at last the Gospel was preached in the churches. But a new effort inflicted a still more formidable blow against Rome.

Lefevre desired to enable the Christians of France to read the Holy Scriptures. On the 30th October 1522, he published a French translation of the four Gospels; on the 6th November, the remaining books of the New Testament; on the 12th October

1524, all these books together, at the house of Collin in Meaux; and in 1525, a French version of the Psalms. Thus was begun in France, almost at the same time as in Germany, that printing and dissemination of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue which, three centuries later, was to be so wonderfully developed throughout the world. In France, as on the other side of the Rhine, the Bible had a decisive influence. Experience had taught many Frenchmen, that when they sought to know Divine things, doubt and obscurity encompassed them on every side. In how many moments and perhaps years in their lives had they been tempted to regard the most certain truths as mere delusions! We need a ray from heaven to enlighten our darkness. Such was the ejaculation of many a soul at the epoch of the Reformation. With longings such as these, numbers received the sacred writings from the hands of Lefevre; they were read in their families and in private; conversations on the Bible became frequent; Christ appeared to those souls so long misled, as the centre and the sun of all revelation. No longer did they require demonstrations to prove that Scripture was from God; they knew it, for by it they had been transported from darkness to light.

Such was the course by which so many distinguished persons in France attained a knowledge of God. But there were yet simpler and more common paths, if such can be, by which many of the lower classes were brought to the truth. The city of Meaux was almost wholly inhabited by artisans and dealers in wool. "There was engendered in many," says a chronicler of the sixteenth century, "so ardent a desire of knowing the way of salvation, that artisans, fullers, and wool-combers took no other recreation, as they worked with their hands, than to talk with each other of the Word of God, and to comfort themselves with the same. Sundays and holidays especially were devoted to the reading of Scripture, and inquiring into the good pleasure of the Lord."

Briconnet rejoiced to see piety take the place of superstition in his diocese. "Lefevre, aided by the renown of his great learning," says a contemporary historian, "contrived so to cajole and circumvent Messire Guillaume Briconnet with his plausible talk, that he caused him to turn aside grievously, so that it has been impossible up to this day to free the city and diocese of Meaux from that pestilent doctrine, where it has so marvelously increased. The misleading that good bishop was a great injury, as until then he had been so devoted to God and to the Virgin Mary."

Yet all were not so grievously turned aside, as the Franciscan says, whom we have just quoted. The city was divided into two parties. On the one side were the monks of St. Francis and the friends of the Romish doctrine; on the other, Briconnet, Lefevre, Farel, and all those who loved the new preaching. A man of the poorer classes, by name Leclerc, was one of the most servile adherents of the monks; but his wife and two sons, Peter and John, had received the Gospel with eagerness, and John, who

was a wool-carder, soon distinguished himself among the new Christians. James Pavanne, a learned and youthful Picard, "a man of great sincerity and uprightness," whom Briconnet had invited to Meaux, showed an ardent zeal for the Reformation. Meaux had become a focus of light. Persons called thither by business heard the Gospel, and carried it back to their homes. It was not in the city alone that men were examining the Scriptures; "many of the villages did the same," says a chronicle, "so that in this diocese an image of the renovated Church was seen to shine forth."

The environs of Meaux were covered with rich crops, and at harvest season a crowd of labourers flocked thither from the surrounding countries. Resting from their toils in the middle of the day, they conversed with the people of the place, who spoke to them of other seed-times and other harvests. Many peasants from Thierache, and particularly from Landouzy, persevered, on their return home, in the doctrines they had heard, and erelong an evangelical church was formed in this district, which is one of the oldest churches in the kingdom. "The renown of this great blessing spread through France," says the chronicler. Briconnet himself proclaimed the Gospel from the pulpit, and endeavoured to scatter around him "that infinite, sweet, mild, true, and only light (to use his own words) which dazzles and enlightens every creature capable of receiving it, and which, while it enlightens him, raises him by adoption to the dignity of a son of God." He besought his flock to lend no ear to those who would turn them aside from the Word. "Though an angel from heaven," said he, "should preach any other Gospel, do not listen to him." Sometimes gloomy thoughts would prey upon his soul. He was not sure of himself: he shrunk back in alarm, as he dwelt upon the fatal consequences of his unfaithfulness; and forewarning his hearers, he said to them:

"Even should I, your bishop, change my language and my doctrine, beware of changing like me." At that moment nothing seemed to indicate the possibility of such a misfortune. "Not only was the Word of God preached," says the chronicle, "but it was followed; all works of charity and love were practiced there; the morals were reformed and superstitions laid low."

Still clinging to the idea of gaining over the king and his mother, the bishop sent to Margaret "the epistles of St. Paul, translated and splendidly illuminated, most humbly entreating her to present them to the king; which cannot but be most pleasing from your hands," added the good bishop. "They are a royal dish," continued he, "fattening without corruption, and healing all manner of sickness. The more we taste them, the more we hunger after them with desire unsatiable, and that never cloys."

What more welcome message could Margaret receive? The moment seemed favourable. Michael Aranda was at Paris, detained by order of the king's mother, for whom he was translating portions of the Holy Scripture. But Margaret would have preferred that Briconnet should present this book himself to her brother. "You would do well to come here," wrote she, "for you know the confidence that Madam and the king place in you."

Thus, probably, was the Word of God placed at that time (in 1522 and 1523) under the eyes of Francis I and Louisa of Savoy. They came into contact with that Gospel which they were afterwards to persecute. We do not find that this Word produced any salutary effect upon them. An impulse of curiosity led them to open that Bible which was then making so much noise; but they closed it as soon as they had opened it.

Margaret herself found it hard to contend against the worldliness by which she was everywhere surrounded. Her tender affection towards her brother, the obedience she owed to her mother, and the flatteries lavished on her by the court, all seemed to conspire against the love she had vowed to Christ. Christ was alone against many. Sometimes Margaret's soul, assailed by so many adversaries, and stunned by the noise of the world, turned aside from its Master. Then, becoming sensible of her faults, the princess would shut herself up in her apartments, and giving way to her sorrow, utter cries very different from the joyous sounds with which Francis and the young lords, the companions of his debauchery, filled the royal palaces in the midst of their entertainments and festivities:—Left you I have, to follow pleasure's voice, Left you I have, and for an evil choice, Left you I have, and whither am I come?

Then turning towards Meaux, Margaret would exclaim in her anguish: "I return to you, to M. Fabry (Lefevre) and all your gentlemen, beseeching you, by your prayers, to obtain of the unspeakable Mercy an alarum for the poor weak and sleepy one, to arouse her from her heavy and deadly slumber." Thus had Meaux become a focus whence the light of the Gospel emanated. The friends of the Reformation indulged in flattering illusions. Who could resist the Gospel if the power of Francis cleared the way? The corrupting influence of the court would then be changed into a holy influence, and France would acquire a moral strength that would render her the benefactress of the world.

But, on their side, the friends of Rome had taken the alarm. Among those at Meaux was a Jacobin monk named Roma. One day, as Lefevre, Farel, and their friends were talking with him and some other of the papal partisans, Lefevre could not suppress his anticipations. "The Gospel is already gaining the hearts of the great

and of the people," said he, "and in a short time, spreading all over France, it will everywhere throw down the inventions of men." The aged doctor was animated; his eyes sparkled; his wornout voice grew sonorous; one might have compared him to the aged Simeon returning thanks to the Lord, because his eyes had seen His salvation. Lefevre's friends shared in his emotion: their amazed opponents were dumb. On a sudden Roma started up impetuously, and exclaimed in the tone of a popular tribune: "Then I and all the other religioners will preach a crusade; we will raise the people; and if the king permits the preaching of your Gospel, we will expel him from his kingdom by his own subjects."

Thus did a monk venture to rise up against the knightly monarch. The Franciscans applauded this language. They must not allow the doctor's prophecy to be fulfilled. Already the friars were returning daily with diminished offerings. The Franciscans in alarm went about among private families. "These new teachers are heretics," said they; "they attack the holiest observances, and deny the most sacred mysteries." Then growing bolder, the most incensed among them issued from their cloister, and proceeded to the bishop's residence. On being admitted, they said to the prelate: "Crush this heresy, or else the pestilence, which is already desolating the city of Meaux, will spread over the whole kingdom."

Briconnet was moved, and for an instant disturbed by this attack, but he did not give way; he felt too much contempt for these ignorant monks and their interested clamours. He went into the pulpit, justified Lefevre, and called the monks pharisees and hypocrites. Still this opposition had already excited trouble and conflict in his soul; he sought to encourage himself by the persuasion that such spiritual combats were necessary. "By this warfare," said he, in his somewhat mystical language, "we arrive at a vivifying death, and by continually mortifying life, we die living, and live dying." The way would have been surer if, casting himself upon the Saviour, as the apostles when tossed by the winds and waves, he had exclaimed; "Lord, help me! or I perish."

The monks of Meaux, enraged at their unfavourable reception by the bishop, resolved to carry their complaints before a higher tribunal. An appeal lay open to them. If the bishop will not give way, he may be reduced to compliance. Their leaders set out for Paris, and concerted measures with Beda and Duchesne. They hastened before the parliament, and denounced the bishop and the heretical teachers. "The city and all the neighbourhood," said they, "are infected with heresy, and its polluted waters flow from the episcopal palace."

Thus did France begin to hear the cry of persecution raised against the Gospel. The sacerdotal and the civil power, the Sorbonne and the parliament, grasped their arms,—arms that were to be stained with blood. Christianity had taught mankind that there are duties and rights anterior to all civil associations; it had emancipated the religious mind, promoted liberty of conscience, and worked a great change in society; for antiquity, which contemplated the citizen everywhere and the man nowhere, had made religion a mere matter of state. But these ideas of liberty had scarcely been given to the world, ere the papacy corrupted them; for the despotism of the prince it had substituted the despotism of the priest; and not unfrequently it had raised both prince and priest against the christian people. A new emancipation was needed; it took place in the sixteenth century. Wherever the Reformation established itself, it broke the yoke of Rome, and the religious mind was again enfranchised. But so rooted in the nature of man is the disposition to tyrannise over truth, that among many protestant nations, the Church, liberated from the arbitrary power of the priest, has again in our days fallen under the yoke of the civil power; destined, like its founder, to be bandied from one despotism to another, to pass from Caiaphas to Pilate, and from Pilate to Caiaphas.

Briconnet had not the courage necessary for resistance. He would not yield everything, but what he did concede satisfied Rome. "We may well do without Luther's writings," he thought, "if we keep the Gospel; we may easily accede to a certain invocation of the Virgin, if we add that it is only by the mediation of Jesus Christ that she possesses any influence." If beside the truth we place the power of error, the papacy is satisfied. But the sacrifice which Briconnet felt the deepest, and which yet was required of him, was the loss of his friends. If the bishop would escape, he must sacrifice his brethren. Of timid character, but little prepared to give up his riches and his station for Christ's sake, already alarmed, shaken, and cast down, he was still further led astray by treacherous advisers: if the evangelical doctors should quit Meaux (said some), they will carry the Reformation elsewhere. His heart was torn by a painful struggle. At last the wisdom of this world prevailed; he gave way, and, on the 15th of October 1523, published three mandates, the first of which enjoined prayers for the dead, and the invocation of the Virgin and of the saints; the second forbade anyone to buy, borrow, read, possess, or carry about with him Luther's works, and ordered them to be torn in pieces, to be scattered to the winds, or to be burnt; and the last established in express terms the doctrine of purgatory. Then, on the 13th of November in the same year, Briconnet forbade the parish priests and their curates to permit the "Lutherans" to preach. This was not all.

The first president of the Parliament of Paris, and Andrew Verjus, councillor in the same court, and before whom Briconnet had shortly afterwards to appear, arrived

at Meaux during Lent 1524, no doubt to satisfy themselves of the bishop's proceedings. The poor prelate did all he could to please them. Already on the 29th of January he had taken the images of the saints under his especial protection; he now began to visit his churches, to preach, and to struggle hard in the presence of the first president and of councillor Verjus to "weed out the heresies that were there shooting up." The deputies of the Parliament returned to Paris fully satisfied. This was Briconnet's first fall.

Lefevre was the special object of hostility. His commentary on the four Gospels, and particularly the "Epistle to Christian Readers," prefixed to it, had inflamed the anger of Beda and his allies. They denounced this writing to the faculty. "Does he not dare to recommend all the faithful to read the Scriptures?" said the fiery syndic. "Does he not tell therein that whoever loves not Christ's Word is not a Christian; and that the Word of God is sufficient to lead to eternal life?"

But Francis I looked on this accusation as a mere theological squabble. He appointed a commission; and Lefevre, having justified himself before it, came off from this attack with all the honours of war. Farel, who had not so many protectors at court, was compelled to leave Meaux. It would appear that he first repaired to Paris; and that, having unsparingly attacked the errors of Rome, he could remain there no longer, and was forced to retire to Dauphiny, whither he was eager to carry the Gospel.

At the time of the dispersion of the Christians at Meaux, another Frenchman, quitting his native country, crossed the threshold of the Augustine convent at Wittenberg, where Luther resided. This was in January 1523. Farel was not the only man in the south of France whom God had prepared for his work. A little further to the south than Gap, on the banks of the Rhone, in that city of Avignon called by Petrarch "the third Babylon," may still be seen the walls of the "apostolic palace," which the popes and cardinals had long filled with their luxury and debauchery, and which a Roman legate now inhabited, lonely and dejected in the midst of this deserted city, whose narrow filthy streets were seldom trod but by the feet of monks and priests.

The little court of the legate was, however, sometimes enlivened by a beautiful, amiable, and laughing boy, who gambolled about its halls. This was Francis Lambert, son of the secretary of the apostolic palace, born in 1487, two years before Farel. The child was at first astonished at the irreligion and crimes of these prelates,—"crimes so numerous and so enormous," says he, "that I cannot describe them." He became habituated to them, however, by degrees, and it would appear that he was himself seduced by bad example. Yet God had implanted in his heart a desire for holiness. His father being dead, his mother had the charge of his education, and, according to

the custom of the times, intrusted him to the care of the Franciscans. The sanctified air of these monks imposed on Francis, and his timid looks followed them respectfully, as he saw them clad in coarse garments, barefoot, or with rude sandals only, moving to and fro, begging in the city and calling on his mother; and if at any time they chanced to smile upon him, he fancied himself (he tells us) almost in heaven. The monks worked upon this disposition, and Francis, attracted by them, assumed the cowl at the age of fifteen. "It was God's pleasure," said he in after-years, "that I might make known to the world the impurity of these whited sepulchres."

During the year of his noviciate everything went on smoothly; he was studiously kept in the dark; but no sooner had he pronounced his vows, than the monks showed themselves in all their deformity, and the halo of sanctity that he had discovered around their heads faded away, and he remained incensed, alarmed, and dejected. Francis soon began to feel a secret strength within him, that drove him forcibly towards the Holy Scriptures, and bound him to believe and to teach the Word of God. In 1517, he was nominated apostolical preacher of the convent, and instead of running about like his colleagues after "fat presents and well-stored tables," he employed himself in travelling afoot through the deserted country, and calling those ignorant people to conversion whom the fire and sincerity of his language drew around him in crowds. But when, after spending several months in passing through the Comtat Venaissin and the surrounding districts, he returned exhausted to his convent on a mule that had been given him to carry his weakened frame, and went to seek a brief repose in his poor cell, some of the monks received him with coldness, others with raillery, and a third party with anger; and they hastened to sell the animal, which they all agreed in saying was the only profit of these evangelical journeys.

One day, as brother Francis was preaching in a certain town, with a gravity quite apostolic and the vivacity of a native of the south: "Kindle a fire," exclaimed he, "before this sacred porch, and there consume the spoils of your luxury, your worldly-mindedness, and your debauchery." Immediately the whole assembly was in commotion; some lighted up a fire; others ran into their houses and returned with dice, playing-cards, and obscene pictures; and then, like the Christians of Ephesus at the preaching of St. Paul, cast all into the flames. A great crowd was gathered round the fire, and among them some Franciscans, who perceiving an indecent drawing of a young female, cunningly drew it away, and hid it under one of their frocks, "to add fuel to their own flames," says Lambert. This did not escape the eye of brother Francis; a holy indignation kindled within him, and boldly addressing the monks, he inveighed against their lubricity and theft. Abashed at being discovered, they sunk their heads, gave up the picture, but swore to be revenged.

Lambert, surrounded with debauchery, and become an object of hatred to the monks, felt from time to time an ardent desire to return into the world, which appeared to him infinitely more holy than the cloister: but he found something still better. Luther's works, carried to the fairs of Lyons, descended the Rhone and reached his cell. They were soon taken from him and burnt; but it was too late. The spirit that animated the Augustine of Wittenberg had passed into the Franciscan of Avignon: he was saved. Vainly until then had he resorted to frequent fasting; vainly had he slept sitting on a stool; vainly had he shunned the looks of woman, worn haircloth next his skin, scourged himself, and so weakened his body that he could scarcely hold himself upright, and sometimes even fainted in the churches and fields as he was preaching to the people. All this, he tells us, could not extinguish the desires and banish the thoughts that preyed upon him, and it was only in faith on the free grace of God and in the sanctity of a married life that he found purity and peace. This is one of those numerous examples which prove that marriage, being of Divine appointment, is a means of grace and holiness, and that the celibacy of priests and monks, the invention of man, is one of the most effectual agents to foster impurity, sully the imagination, disturb the peace of families, and fill society with innumerable disorders.

At last the friar had made up his mind; he will quit the convent, he will abandon popery, he will leave France. He will go where the streams of the Gospel flow abundant and pure, and he will there plunge into them, and quench the fires that are consuming him. Since all his efforts are unavailing, he will go to Wittenberg, to that great servant of God, whose name alone conjures and affrights the devil, in order that he may find peace. He took advantage of some letters that were to be carried to one of the superiors of the order, and having donned his frock, quitted the Franciscan convent of Avignon in the spring of 1522, after twenty years of struggle. He ascended the Rhone, traversed Lyons, and crossed the forests that cover the lower ridges of the Jura. This tall, thin, ungraceful monk still wore the habit of his order, and rode on an ass, his bare feet almost touching the ground. We have already seen him pass through Geneva, Lausanne, Berne, and Zurich. In the beginning of 1523, he was at Wittenberg, and embraced Luther. But let us return to France and to the Church of Meaux.

CHAPTER 8

Lefevre and Farel persecuted—Difference between the Lutheran and Reformed Churches—Leclerc posts up his Placards—Leclerc branded—Berquin's Zeal—Berquin before the Parliament—Rescued by Francis I—Mazurier's Apostacy—Fall and Remorse of Pavanne—Metz—Chatelain—Peter Toussaint becomes attentive—Leclerc breaks the Images—Leclerc's Condemnation and Torture—Martyrdom of Chatelain—Flight

Lefevre intimidated, Briconnet drawing back, Farel compelled to fly—here was a beginning of victory. They already imagined at the Sorbonne that they had mastered the movement; the doctors and monks congratulated each other on their triumphs. But this was not enough; blood had not flowed. They set to work again; and blood, since it must be so, was erelong to gratify the fanaticism of Rome.

The evangelical Christians of Meaux, seeing their leaders dispersed, sought to edify one another. The wool-carder, John Leclerc, whom the lessons of the doctors, the reading of the Bible, and some tracts, had instructed in the christian doctrine, signalised himself by his zeal and facility in expounding Scripture. He was one of those men whom the Spirit of God fills with courage, and soon places at the head of a religious movement. It was not long before the Church of Meaux regarded him as its minister.

The idea of a universal priesthood, such a living principle among the first Christians, had been re-established by Luther in the sixteenth century. But this idea seems then to have existed only in theory in the Lutheran church, and to have been really acted upon solely among the reformed Christians. The Lutheran Churches (and here they agree with the Anglican Church) perhaps took a middle course between the Romish and the Reformed Churches. Among the Lutherans, everything proceeded from the pastor or the priest; and nothing was counted valid in the Church that did not flow regularly through its chiefs. But the Reformed Churches, while they maintained the Divine appointment of the ministry, which some sects deny, approached nearer to the primitive condition of the apostolical communities. From the times of which we are speaking, they recognised and proclaimed that the christian flocks ought not simply to receive what the pastor gives; that the members of the Church, as well as its leaders, possess the key of that treasure whence the latter derive their instruction, for the Bible is in the hands of all; that the graces of God, the spirit of faith, of wisdom, of consolation, of light, are not bestowed on the pastor only; that every man is called upon to employ the gift he has received for the good of all;

and that [458] a certain gift, necessary to the edification of the Church, may be refused to a minister, and yet granted to one of his flock.

Thus the passive state of the Church was then changed into a state of general activity; and in France, especially, this revolution was accomplished. In other countries, the reformers were almost exclusively pastors and doctors; but in France men of learning had from the very beginning pious men of the people for their allies. In that country God selected for his first workmen a doctor of the Sorbonne and a wool-comber. The wool-comber Leclerc began to visit from house to house, confirming the disciples. But not stopping short at these ordinary cares, he would fain have seen the edifice of popery overthrown, and France, from the midst of these ruins, turning with a cry of joy towards the Gospel.His unguarded zeal may remind us of that Hottinger at Zurich, and of Carlstadt at Wittenberg. He wrote a proclamation against the Antichrist of Rome, announcing that the Lord was about to destroy it by the breath of his mouth. He then boldly posted his "placards" on the gates of the cathedral. Presently all was in confusion around that ancient edifice. The faithful were amazed; the priests exasperated. What! a fellow whose employment is wool-combing dares measure himself with the pope! The Franciscans were outrageous, and demanded that this once at least a terrible example should be made. Leclerc was thrown into prison.

His trial was finished in a few days, under the eyes of Briconnet himself, who was now to witness and tolerate all that was done. The carder was condemned to be whipped three days successively through the city, and on the third to be branded on the forehead. This sad spectacle soon began. Leclerc was led through the streets with his hands bound, his back bare, and the executioners inflicted on him the blows he had drawn upon himself by rising up against the Bishop of Rome. An immense crowd followed in the track marked by the martyr's blood. Some yelled with rage against the heretic; others by their silence gave him no unequivocal marks of their tender compassion. One woman encouraged the unhappy man by her looks and words: she was his mother.

At last, on the third day, when the blood-stained procession was ended, they halted with Leclerc at the usual place of execution. The hangman prepared the fire, heated the iron that was to stamp its burning mark on the evangelist, and approaching him, branded him on the forehead as a heretic. A shriek was heard, but it did not proceed from the martyr. His mother, a spectator of the dreadful scene, and wrung with anguish, endured a bitter strife: it was the enthusiasm of faith struggling in her heart with maternal love; faith prevailed a last, and she exclaimed with a voice that made the adversaries tremble: "Glory to Jesus Christ and to his witnesses!" Thus

did that Frenchwoman of the sixteenth century fulfil the commandment of the Son of God: "He that loveth his son more than me is not worthy of me." Such boldness, and at such a moment, merited signal punishment; but this christian mother had appalled the hearts both of priests and soldiers. All their fury was controlled by a stronger arm than theirs. The crowd, respectfully making way, allowed the martyr's mother slowly to regain her humble dwelling. The monks, and even the town-sergeants, gazed on her without moving. "Not one of her enemies dared lay hands upon her," said Theodore Beza. After this execution, Leclerc, being set at liberty, retired to Rosay in Brie, a small town about six leagues from Meaux, and subsequently to Metz, where we shall meet with him again.

The adversaries were triumphant. "The Cordeliers having recaptured the pulpits, propagated their lies and trumpery as usual." But the poor workmen of the city, prevented from hearing the Word in regular assemblies, "began to meet in secret," says our chronicler, "after the manner of the sons of the prophets in the time of Ahab, and of the Christians of the primitive Church; and, as opportunity offered, they assembled at one time in a house, at another in some cave, sometimes also in a vineyard or in a wood. There, he amongst them who was most versed in the Holy Scriptures exhorted the rest; and this done, they all prayed together with great courage, supporting each other by the hope that the Gospel would be revived in France, and that the tyranny of Antichrist would come to an end."—There is no power that can arrest the progress of truth.

But one victim only was not enough; and if the first against whom the persecution was let loose was a wool-comber, the second was a gentleman of the court. It was necessary to frighten the nobles as well as the people. Their reverences of the Sorbonne of Paris could not think of being outstripped by the Franciscans of Meaux. Berquin, "the most learned of the nobles," had derived fresh courage from the Holy Scriptures, and after having attacked "the hornets of the Sorbonne" in certain epigrams, had openly accused them of impiety.

Beda and Duchesne, who had not ventured to reply in their usual manner to the witticisms of the king's gentleman, changed [459] their mind, as soon as they discovered serious convictions latent behind these attacks. Berquin had become a Christian: his ruin was determined on. Beda and Duchesne, having seized some of his translations, found in them matter to burn more heretics than one. "He maintains," said they, "that it is wrong to invoke the Virgin Mary in place of the Holy Ghost, and to call her the source of all grace. He inveighs against the practice of calling her our hope, our life, and says that these titles belong only to the Son of God." There were other matters besides these. Berquin's study was like a bookseller's shop, whence

works of corruption were circulated through the whole kingdom. The Common-places of Melancthon, in particular, served, by the elegance of their style, to shake the faith of the literary men in France. This pious noble, living only amidst his folios and his tracts, had become, out of christian charity, translator, corrector, printer, and bookseller It was essential to check this formidable torrent at its very source.

One day, as Berquin was quietly seated at his studies, among his beloved books, his house was suddenly surrounded by the sergeantsat-arms, who knocked violently at the door. They were the Sorbonne and its agents, who, furnished with authority from the parliament, were making a domiciliary visit. Beda, the formidable syndic, was at their head, and never did inquisitor perform his duty better; accompanied by his satellites, he entered Berquin's library, told him his business, ordered a watchful eye to be kept upon him, and began his search. Not a book escaped his piercing glance, and an exact inventory of the whole was drawn up by his orders. Here was a treatise by Melancthon, there a book by Carlstadt; farther on, a work of Luther's. Here were heretical books translated from Latin into French by Berquin himself; there, others of his own composition. All the works that Beda seized, except two, were filled with Lutheran errors. He left the house, carrying off his booty, and more elated than ever was general laden with the spoils of vanquished nations.

Berquin saw that a great storm had burst upon him but his courage did not falter. He despised his enemies too much to fear them. Meanwhile Beda lost no time. On the 13th of May 1523, the parliament issued a decree that all the books seized in Berquin's house should be laid before the faculty of theology. The opinion of the Sorbonne was soon pronounced; on the 25th of June it condemned all the works, with the exception of the two already mentioned, to be burnt as heretical, and ordered that Berquin should abjure his errors. The parliament ratified this decision.

The nobleman appeared before this formidable body. He knew that the next step might be to the scaffold; but, like Luther at Worms, he remained firm. Vainly did the parliament order him to retract. Berquin was not one of those who fall away after having been made partakers of the Holy Ghost. Whosoever is begotten of God, keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. Every fall proves that the previous conversion has been only apparent or partial; but Be rquin's conversion was real. He replied with firmness to the court before which he stood. The parliament, more severe than the Diet of Worms had been, ordered its officers to seize the accused, and take him to the prison of the Conciergerie. This was on the 1st of August 1523. On the 5th the parliament handed over the heretic to the Bishop of Paris, in order that this prelate might take cognizance of the affair, and that, assisted by the doctors

and councillors, he should pronounce sentence on the culprit. He was transferred to the episcopal prison.

Thus was Berquin passed from court to court and from one prison to another. Beda, Duchesne, and their cabal had their victim in their grasp; but the court still cherished a grudge against the Sorbonne, and Francis was more powerful than Beda. This transaction excited great indignation among the nobles. Do these monks and priests forget what the sword of a gentleman is worth? "Of what is he accused?" said they to Francis I; "of blaming the custom of invoking the Virgin in place of the Holy Ghost? But Erasmus and many others blame it likewise. Is it for such trifles that they imprison a king's officer? This attack is aimed at literature, true religion, the nobility, chivalry, nay the crown itself." The king was glad to have another opportunity of vexing the whole company. He issued letters transferring the cause to the royal council, and on the 8th of August an usher appeared at the bishop's prison with an order from the king to set Berquin at liberty.

The question now was whether the monks would give way. Francis I, who had anticipated some resistance, said to the agent commissioned to execute his orders: "If you meet with any resistance, I authorize you to break open the gates." This language was clear. The monks and the Sorbonne submitted to the affront, and Berquin being restored to liberty appeared before the king's council, by which he was acquitted.

Thus did Francis I humiliate the Church. Berquin imagined that France, under his reign, might emancipate herself from the papacy, and had thoughts of renewing the war. For this purpose he entered [460] into communication with Erasmus, who at once recognised him as
a man of worth. But, ever timid and temporizing, the philosopher said to him: "Beware of treading on a hornet's nest, and pursue your studies in peace. Above all, do not mix me up with your affair; that would neither serve you nor me."

This rebuff did not discourage Berquin; if the mightiest genius of the age draws back, he will put his trust in God who never falters. God's work will be done either with or without the aid of man. "Berquin," said Erasmus, "had some resemblance to the palm-tree; he rose up again, and became proud and towering against those who sought to alarm him."

Such were not all who had embraced the evangelical doctrine. Martial Mazurier had been one of the most zealous preachers. He was accused of teaching very erroneous opinions, and even of having committed certain acts of violence while at Meaux. "This Marital Mazurier, being at Meaux," says a manuscript of that city,

which we have already quoted, "going to the church of the reverend Grayfriars, and seeing the image of St. Francis, with the five wounds, outside the convent-gate, where that of St. Roch now stands, threw it down and broke it in pieces." Mazurier was apprehended, and sent to the Conciergerie, where he suddenly fell into deep reflection and severe anguish. It was the morality rather than the doctrine of the Gospel that had attracted him to the ranks of the reformers; and morality left him without strength. Alarmed at the prospect of the stake, and decidedly of opinion that in France the victory would remain on the side of Rome, he easily persuaded himself that he would enjoy more influence and honour by returning to the papacy. Accordingly he retracted what he had taught, and caused doctrines the very opposite of those he had previously held to be preached in his parish; and subsequently joining the most fanatical doctors, and particularly the celebrated Ignatius Loyola, he became from that time the most zealous supporter of the papal cause. From the days of the Emperor Julian, apostates, after their infidelity, have always become the most merciless persecutors of the doctrines they had once professed.

Mazurier soon found an opportunity of showing his zeal. The youthful James Pavanne had also been thrown into prison. Martial hoped that, by making him fall like himself, he might cover his own shame. The youth, amiability, learning, and uprightness of Pavanne, created a general interest in his favour, and Mazurier imagined that he would himself be less culpable, if he could persuade Master James to follow his example. He visited him in prison, and began his manoeuvers by pretending that he had advanced further than Pavanne in the knowledge of the truth: "You are mistaken, James," he often repeated to him; "you have not gone to the depths of the sea; you only know the surface of the waters." Nothing was spared, neither sophistry, promises, nor threats. The unhappy youth, seduced, agitated, and shaken, sunk at last under these perfidious attacks, and publicly retracted his pretended errors on the morrow of Christmas-day 1524. But from that hour a spirit of dejection and remorse was sent on Pavanne by the Almighty. A deep sadness preyed upon him, and he was continually sighing. "Alas!" repeated he, "there is nothing but bitterness for me in life." Sad wages of unbelief!

Nevertheless, among those who had received the Word of God in France, were men of more intrepid spirit than Mazurier and Pavanne. About the end of the year 1523, Leclerc had withdrawn to Metz in Lorraine, and there, says Theodore Beza, he had followed the example of Saint Paul at Corinth, who, while working at his trade as a tentmaker, persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. Leclerc, still pursuing his occupation as a wool-carder, instructed the people of his own condition; and many of them had been really converted. Thus did this humble artisan lay the foundation of a church which afterwards became celebrated.

Leclerc was not the first individual who had endeavored to shed the new light of the Gospel over Metz. A scholar, renowned in that age for his skill in the occult sciences, Master Agrippa of Nettesheim, "a marvelously learned clerk, of small stature, who had spent much time in travel, who spoke every language, and had studied every science," had fixed his residence at Metz, and had even become syndic of the city. Agrippa had procured Luther's works, and communicated them to his friends, and among others to Master John, priest of Sainte-Croix, himself a great clerk, and with whom Master Agrippa was very intimate. Many of the clergy, nobility, and citizens, stirred by the courage Luther had shown at Worms, were gained over to his cause, and already in March 1522, an evangelical placard extolling what Luther had done was posted in large letters on a corner of the episcopal palace, and excited much public attention. But when [461] Leclerc arrived, the flames, for an instant overpowered, sprung up with renewed energy. In the council-room, in the hall of the chapter, and in the homes of the citizens, the conversation turned perpetually on the Lutheran business. "Many great clerks and learned persons were daily questioning, discussing, and debating this matter, and for the most part taking Luther's side, and already preaching and proclaiming that accursed sect."

Erelong the evangelical cause received a powerful reinforcement. "About this same time (1524)," says the chronicle, "there came to Metz an Augustine friar named John Chaistellain (Chatelain), a man declining in years, and of agreeable manners, a great preacher and very eloquent, a wondrous comforter to the poorer sort. By which means he gained the good-will of most of the people (not of all), especially of the majority of the priests and great rabbins, against whom the said friar John preached daily, setting forth their vices and their sins, saying that they abused the poor people, by which great animosity was stirred up."

John Chatelain, an Augustine monk of Tournay, and doctor of divinity, had been brought to the knowledge of God by his intercourse with the Augustines of Antwerp. The doctrine of Christ, when preached by him attired in chasuble and stole, appeared less extraordinary to the inhabitants of Metz, than when it fell from the lips of a poor artisan, who laid aside the comb with which he carded his wool, to explain a French version of the Gospel.

Everything was fermenting in Metz during that famous Lent of 1524, when a new character appeared on the stage, a priest, a doctor, an ex-friar, and (what had never yet been seen in France or Lorraine) having a wife with him. This was Lambert of Avignon.

On Lambert's arrival at Wittenberg, which had been the object of his journey on leaving the convent, he was well received by Luther, and the reformer had hastened to recommend to Spalatin and to the elector this friar, who, "on account of persecution, had chosen poverty and exile He pleases me in all respects," added Luther. Lambert had begun to lecture on the prophet Hosea at the university, before an auditory who could not conceal their surprise at hearing such things from the mouth of a Gaul.

And then, with eyes ever turned towards his native land, he had begun to translate into French and Italian several evangelical pamphlets published by Luther and other doctors. He was not the only Frenchman at Wittenberg: he there met with counts, knights, nobles, and others come from France to see the elector and to converse with Luther, "the overseer of the works that were accomplishing in the world." These Frenchmen mutually encouraged each other, and, as is usual with emigrants, exaggerated the state of affairs, imagining that a speedy revolution would lead to the triumph in their own country of the cause which they had so much at heart. "Almost the whole of Gaul is stirring," wrote Lambert to the Elector of Saxony. "Although in France the truth has no master and no leader, its friends are very numerous.

One thing alone checked these Frenchmen at Wittenberg: the printing of the pamphlets intended for their countrymen. "Would that I could find some one," exclaimed Lambert, "that could print not only in Latin, but in French and even in Italian." This was the posture of affairs when certain strangers appeared: they were from Hamburg. "We come to ask you for some French treatises," said they to Lambert; "for we have some one in Hamburg who will print them carefully." It would appear that there were also a number of French emigrants at Hamburg, and a printer among the rest. Lambert could not restrain his joy; but there was still another difficulty: "And how," said he, "can we convey these books into France from the banks of the Elbe?"—"By sea; by the vessels that sail to and fro," replied the Hamburgers. "Every necessary arrangement has been made." Thus the Gospel had hardly been restored to the Church, before the ocean became an instrument of its dissemination. The Lord hath made a way in the sea.

Yet this could not suffice; every Frenchman returning into France was to carry a few books with him, although the scaffold might be the reward of his enterprise. Now there is more talking, then there was more action. A young French nobleman, Claude of Taureau, who left Wittenberg in May 1523, took with him a great number of evangelical treatises and letters which Lambert had written to many of the most conspicuous men of France and Savoy.

On the 13th of July 1523, Lambert, then at the age of thirty-six, "determined (in his own words) to flee the paths of impurity as [462] he had always done," entered into the holy bonds of wedlock, two years before Luther, and the first of the French monks or priests. When married, he called to mind that he ought not to think "how he might please his wife, but how he might please the Lord." Christina, the daughter of a worthy citizen of Herzberg, was ready to be the companion of his sufferings. Lambert told his Wittenberg friends that he intended returning to France.

Luther and Melancthon were terrified at the thought. "It is rather from France to Germany," said Luther, "than from Germany to France, that you should go." Lambert, all whose thoughts were in France, paid no attention to the reformer's advice. And yet Luther's sentiments could not fail to make some impression on him. Should he go to Zurich, whither Luther urges him? or to France or Lorraine, where Farel and, as he believes, Christ himself are calling him? He was in great perplexity. At Zurich he would find peace and safety; in France peril and death. His rest was broken, he could find no repose; he wandered through the streets of Wittenberg with downcast eyes, and his wife could not restore him to serenity.

At last he fell on his knees, and called upon the Lord to put an end to his struggle, by making known His will in the casting of lots. He took two slips of paper; on one he wrote France, on the other Switzerland; he closed his eyes and drew; the lot had fallen on France. Again he fell on his knees: "O God," said he, "if thou wilt not close these lips that desire to utter thy praise, deign to make known thy pleasure." Again he tried, and the answer still was France. And some hours after, recollecting (said he) that Gideon, when called to march against the Midianites, had thrice asked for a sign from heaven near the oak of Ophrah, he prayed God a third time, and a third time the lot replied France. From that hour he hesitated no longer, and Luther, who could not put such confidence in the lot, for the sake of peace, ceased urging his objections, and Lambert, in the month of February or March 1524, taking his wife with him, departed for Strasburg, whence he repaired to Metz.

He soon became intimate with Chatelain, whom he called "his Jonathan," and appearing before a meeting commissioned to inquire into his doctrines: "Suffer me to preach in public," said the man of Avignon, "and I will forthwith publish one hundred and sixteen theses explanatory of my doctrine, and which I will defend against all manner of persons."

The Chamber of XIII, messieurs the clerks, and messeigneurs of justice, before whom Lambert had been called, were frightened at such a request, and refused permission; and shortly after, the whole troop of Antichrist was in commotion, said

Lambert; canons, monks, inquisitors, the bishop's officials, and all their partisans, endeavoured to seize and throw him into the dungeon of some cloister. The magistrates protected Lambert, but intimated that he had better leave the city. Lambert obeyed. "I will flee," said he to his Master, "but will still confess thy name! Whenever it be thy good pleasure, I will endure death. I am in thy hands; I flee, and yet I flee not; it is the flight which becometh all those who are made perfect." Lambert had not been a fortnight in Metz. He was to learn that God makes known his will by other means than the drawing of lots. It was not for France that this monk from the banks of the Rhone was destined; we shall soon behold him playing an important part in Germany, as reformer of Hesse. He returned to Strasburg, leaving Chatelain and Leclerc at Metz. Owing to the zeal of these two men the light of the Gospel spread more and more through the whole city.

A very devout woman, named Toussaint, of the middle rank, had a son called Peter, with whom, in the midst of his sports, she would often converse in a serious strain. Everywhere, even in the homes of the townspeople, something extraordinary was expected. One day the child, indulging in the amusements natural to his age, was riding on a stick in his mother's room, when the latter, conversing with her friends on the things of God, said to them with an agitated voice: "Antichrist will soon come with great power, and destroy those who have been converted at the preaching of Elias." These words being frequently repeated attracted the child's attention, and he recollected them long after. Peter Toussaint was no longer a child when the doctor of theology and the wool-comber were preaching the Gospel at Metz. His relations and friends, surprised at his youthful genius, hoped to see him one day filling an eminent station in the Church.

One of his uncles, his father's brother, was dean of Metz; it was the [463] highest dignity in the chapter. The Cardinal John of Lorraine, son of Duke Rene, who maintained a large establishment, testified much regard for the dean and his nephew. The latter, notwithstanding his youth, had just obtained a prebend, when he began to lend an attentive ear to the Gospel. Might not the preaching of Chatelain and Leclerc be that of Elias? It is true, Antichrist is already arming against it in every quarter. But it matters not. "Let us lift up our heads to the Lord," said he, "for he will come and will not tarry."

The evangelical doctrine was making its way into the first families of Metz. The chevalier D'Esch, a man highly respected, and the dean's intimate friend, had just been converted. The friends of the Gospel rejoiced. "The knight, our worthy master," repeated Peter, adding with noble candour; "if however, we are permitted to have a master upon earth."

Thus Metz was about to become a focus of light, when the imprudent zeal of Leclerc suddenly arrested this slow but sure progress, and aroused a storm that threatened utter ruin to the rising church. The common people of Metz continued walking in their old superstitions, and Leclerc's heart was vexed at seeing this great city plunged in "idolatry." One of their great festivals was approaching. About a league from the city stood a chapel containing images of the Virgin and of the most celebrated saints of the country, and whither all the inhabitants of Metz were in the habit of making a pilgrimage on a certain day in the year, to worship the images and to obtain the pardon of their sins.

The eve of the festival had arrived: Leclerc's pious and courageous soul was violently agitated. Has not God said: Thou shalt not bow down to their gods; but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images? Leclerc thought that this command was addressed to him, and without consulting either Chatelain, Esch, or any of those whom he might have suspected would have dissuaded him, quitted the city in the evening, just as night was coming on, and approached the chapel. There he pondered a while sitting silently before the statues. He still had it in his power to withdraw; but to-morrow, in a few hours, the whole city that should worship God alone will be kneeling down before these blocks of wood and stone. A struggle ensued in the wool-comber's bosom, like that which we trace in so many Christians of the primitive ages of the Church. What matters it to him that what he sees are the images of saints, and not of heathen gods and goddesses? Does not the worship which the people pay to these images belong to God alone? Like Polyeucte before the idols in the temple, his heart shudders, his courage revives: Ne perdons plus de temps, le sacrifice est pret, Allons y du vrai Dieu soutenir l'interet; Allons fouler aux pieds ce foudre ridicule, Dont arme un bois pourri ce peuple trop credule; Allons en eclairer l'aveuglement fatal, Allons briser ces dieux de pierre et de metal; Abandonnons nos jours a cette ardeur celeste—Faisons triompher Dieu;—qu'il dispose du reste. Corneille, Polyeucte.

Leclerc arose, approached the images, took them down and broke them in pieces, indignantly scattering their fragments before the altar. He doubted not that the Spirit of the Lord had excited him to this action, and Theodore Beza thinks the same. After this, Leclerc returned to Metz, which he entered at daybreak, unnoticed save by a few persons as he was entering the gates.

Meanwhile all were in motion in the ancient city; bells were ringing; the brotherhoods were assembling; and the whole population of Metz, headed by the canons, priests, and monks, went forth in solemn procession; they recited prayers or

sung hymns to the saints they were going to adore; crosses and banners moved on in due order, and instruments of music or drums responded to the voices of the faithful. At length, after nearly an hour's march, the procession reached the place of pilgrimage. But what was the astonishment of the priest, when advancing, censor in hand, they discovered the images they had come to worship mutilated and covering the earth with their fragments. They recoiled with horror, and announced this sacrilegious act to the crowd. Suddenly the chanting ceased, the instruments were silent, the banners lowered, and the whole multitude was in a state of indescribable agitation. The canons, priests, and monks endeavoured to inflame their minds, and excited the people to search for the criminal, and demand his death. But one cry burst from every lip: "Death, death to the sacrilegious wretch!" They returned to Metz in haste and in disorder.

Leclerc was known to all; many times he had called the images idols. Besides had he not been seen at daybreak returning from the direction of the chapel. He was seized; he immediately confessed his crime, and conjured the people to worship God alone. But this language still further exasperated the fury of the multitude, who would have dragged him to instant death. When led before his judges, he boldly declared that Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, should alone be adored. He was sentenced to be burnt alive, [464] and taken out to the place of execution.

Here a fearful scene awaited him. The cruelty of his persecutors had been contriving all that could render his punishment more horrible. Near the scaffold men were heating pincers that were to serve as the instruments of their rage. Leclerc, firm and calm, heard unmoved the wild yells of the monks and people. They began by cutting off his right hand; then taking up the burning pincers, they tore off his nose; after this, they lacerated his arms, and when they had thus mangled them in several places, they concluded by burning his breasts. While his enemies were in this manner wreaking their vengeance on his body, Leclerc's mind was at rest. He recited solemnly and with a loud voice these words of David: Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. O Israel, trust thou in the Lord; he is their help and their shield. (Psalm 115:4-9). The sight of such fortitude daunted the enemies, and strengthened the faithful; the people, who had before shown so much anger, were astonished and touched with compassion. After these tortures Leclerc was burnt by a slow fire, in conformity with his sentence. Such was the death of the first martyr of the Gospel in France.

But the priests of Metz were not satisfied. In vain had they endeavoured to shake the constancy of Chatelain. "He is deaf as an adder," said they, "and refuses to hear the truth." He was seized by the creatures of the Cardinal of Lorraine and carried to the castle of Nommeny. He was then degraded by the bishop's officers, who stripped him of his priestly vestments, and scraped his fingers with a piece of glass, saying: "By this scraping, we deprive thee of the power to sacrifice, consecrate, and bless, which thou receivedst by the anointing of hands." Then, throwing over him a layman's dress, they surrendered him to the secular power, which condemned him to be burnt alive. The pile was soon erected, and the minister of Christ consumed by the flames. "Lutheranism spread not the less through the whole district of Metz," say the authors of the history of the Gallican Church, who in other respects highly approve of this severity.

As soon as this storm began to beat upon the Church at Metz, tribulation had entered into Toussaint's family. His uncle, the dean, without taking an active part in the measures directed against Leclerc and Chatelain, shuddered at the thought that his nephew was one of their party. His mother's alarm was greater still. There was not a moment to lose; the liberty and life of all who had lent their ear to the Gospel were endangered. The blood that the inquisitors had shed had only increased their thirst: more scaffolds would erelong be raised. Peter Toussaint, the knight Esch, and many others, hastily quitted Metz, and sought refuge at Basle.

CHAPTER 9

Farel and his Brothers—Farel expelled from Gap—He preaches in the Fields—The Knight Anemond of Coct—The Minorite—Anemond quits France—Luther to the Duke of Savoy—Farel quits France

Thus violently did the gale of persecution blow at Meaux and at Metz. The north of France rejected the Gospel: the Gospel for a while gave way. But the Reformation only changed its ground; and the provinces of the south-east became the scene of action.

Farel, who had taken refuge at the foot of the Alps, was there labouring with great activity. It was of little moment to him to enjoy the sweets of domestic life in the bosom of his family. The rumour of what had taken place at Meaux and at Paris had filled his brothers with a certain degree of terror; but an unknown power was drawing them towards the new and admirable things on which William conversed with them. The latter besought them with all the impetuosity of his zeal to be converted to the Gospel; and Daniel, Walter, and Claude were at last won over to that God whom their brother announced. They did not at first abandon the religious worship of their forefathers; but, when persecution arose, they courageously sacrificed their friends, their property, and their country to worship Jesus Christ in freedom. The brothers of Luther and Zwingle of do not appear to have been so decidedly converted to the Gospel; the French Reform from its very commencement had a more tender and domestic character.

Farel did not confine his exhortations to his brethren; he proclaimed the truth to his relations and friends at Gap and in the neighbourhood. It would even appear, if we may credit a manuscript, that, profiting by the friendship of certain clergymen, he began to [465] preach the Gospel in several churches; but other authorities positively declare that he did not at this time ascend the pulpit. However this may be, the doctrine he professed caused great agitation. The multitude and the clergy desired to silence him. “What new and strange heresy is this?” said they; “must all the practices of piety be counted vain? He is neither monk nor priest: he has no business to preach.”

Erelong all the civil and ecclesiastical powers of Gap combined against Farel. He was evidently an agent of that sect which the whole country is opposing. “Let us cast this firebrand of discord far from us,” they exclaimed. Farel was summoned to appear, harshly treated, and violently expelled from the city.

He did not, however, abandon his native country: were there not in the fields, the villages, the banks of the Durance, of the Guisanne, and of the Isere many souls that stood in need of the Gospel? and if he incurred any danger, could he not find an asylum in those forests, caverns, and steep rocks that he had so often traversed in his youth? He began, therefore, to go through the country preaching in private houses and in solitary fields, and seeking an asylum in the woods and on the brink of torrents. This was a school in which God trained him for other labours. "The crosses, persecutions, and machinations of Satan, of which I was forewarned, have not been wanting," said he; "they are even much severer than I could have borne of myself; but God is my father; He has provided and always will provide me the strength which I require." A great number of the inhabitants of these rural districts received the truth from his lips. Thus the persecution that had driven Farel from Paris and from Meaux, contributed to the spread of the Reformation in the provinces of the Saone, of the Rhone, and of the Alps. Every age has witnessed the fulfillment of the saying of the Scripture: They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word.

Among the Frenchmen who were at that time gained over to the Gospel was a gentleman of Dauphiny, the chevalier Anemond de Coct, younger son of the auditor of Coct, lord of Chatelard. He was active, ardent, and lively, sincerely pious, and a foe to relics, processions, and the clergy; he received the evangelical doctrine with great alacrity, and was soon entirely devoted to it. He could not endure forms in religion, and would gladly have abolished all the ceremonies of the Church. The religion of the heart, the inward worship, was in his view the only true one.

"Never," said he, "has my spirit found any rest in externals. The sum of Christianity is comprised in these words: John truly baptised with water, but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost; ye must put on the new man." Coct, endued with all the vivacity of a Frenchman, spoke and wrote at one time in Latin, at another in French. He read and quoted Donatus, Thomas Aquinas, Juvenal, and the Bible! His style was abrupt, passing suddenly from one idea to another. Ever in motion, he presented himself wherever a door seemed open to the Gospel, or a celebrated doctor was to be heard. By his cordiality he won the hearts of all his acquaintances. "He is distinguished by rank and learning," said Zwingle at a later period, "but more distinguished still for piety and affability." Anemond is the type of many of the reformed Frenchmen. Vivacity, simple-heartedness, zeal sometimes carried even to imprudence, are the qualities often found in those of his fellow-countrymen who embraced the Gospel. But at the opposite extreme of the French character we find the serious features of Calvin, a weighty counterpoise to the levity of Coct. Calvin and Anemond are the two poles between which revolves the whole religious world in France.

No sooner had Anemond received the knowledge of Jesus Christ from Farel, than he sought himself to gain converts to that doctrine of spirit and of life. His father was dead; his elder brother, of harsh and haughty temper, disdainfully repelled him. Lawrence, the youngest of the family, and who loved him sincerely, seemed but half to understand him. Anemond, finding himself rejected by his own kindred, turned his activity to another quarter.

Hitherto the awakening in Dauphiny had been confined solely to the laity. Farel, Anemond, and their friends, desired to see a priest at the head of this movement, which seemed as if it would shake the provinces of the Alps. There dwelt at Grenoble a minorite priest, Peter Sebville by name, a preacher of great eloquence, of an honest and good heart, not taking counsel with flesh and blood, and whom God was gradually attracting to him. Sebville soon became aware that there is no infallible teacher but the Word of God; and, abandoning the doctrines that are supported on human testimony alone, he determined in his own mind to preach the Word "purely, clearly, and holily." In these three words the whole of the [466]

Reformation is summed up. Coct and Farel were delighted as they heard this new preacher of grace raising his eloquent voice in their province, and thought that their own presence would henceforward be less necessary.

The more the awakening spread, the more violent became the opposition. Anemond, desirous of becoming acquainted with Luther and Zwingle, and of visiting those countries where the Reformation had originated, and indignant at the rejection of the Gospel by his fellow-countrymen, resolved to bid farewell to his home and his family. He made his will, disposing of his property, at that time in the hands of his elder brother, the lord of Chatelard, in favour of his brother Lawrence; and then quitting Dauphiny and France, he made his way with all the impetuosity of the south, through countries which it was no easy matter in that age to traverse, and passing through Switzerland, hardly stopping at Basle, he arrived at Wittenberg, where Luther was residing.

This was shortly after the second Diet of Nuremberg. The French gentleman accosted the Saxon doctor with his usual vivacity; talked with him enthusiastically about the Gospel, and eagerly laid before him the plans he had formed for the propagation of the truth. The gravity of the Saxon smiled at the southern imagination of the chevalier; and Luther, notwithstanding certain prejudices against the French character, was fascinated and carried away by Anemond. He was affected by the thought that this gentleman had come from France to Wittenberg for the sake of the

Gospel. "Assuredly," said the reformer to his friends, "this French knight is an excellent, learned, and pious man." The young noble produced the same impression on Zwingle and on Luther.

Anemond, seeing what Luther and Zwingle had done, thought that if they would turn their attention to France and Savoy, nothing could resist them. Accordingly, as he could not prevail on them to go thither, he begged them at least to write. In particular, he requested Luther to address a letter to Duke Charles of Savoy, brother to Louisa and Philiberta, and uncle to Francis I and Margaret. "This prince," said he to the doctor, "feels great attraction towards piety and true religion, and loves to converse on the Reformation with some of the persons about his court. He is just the man to understand you; for his motto is this: Nihil deest timentibus Deum, and this device is yours also. Injured in turns by the empire and by France, humiliated, vexed, and always in danger, his heart stands in need of God and of his grace: all that he wants is a powerful impulse. If he were won to the Gospel, he would have an immense influence on Switzerland, Savoy, and France. Write to him, I beseech you."

Luther was wholly German in character, and would have found himself ill at ease out of Germany; yet, animated by a true Catholicism, he stretched out his hands as soon as he saw brethren, and in every place when there was any word of exhortation to be given, he took care that it should be heard. He sometimes wrote on the same day to the farthest parts of Europe, to the Low Countries, to Savoy, and to Livonia.

"Assuredly," replied he to Anemond's request, "a love for the Gospel is a rare gift, and an inestimable jewel in a prince." And he addressed a letter to the duke, which Anemond probably carried as far as Switzerland.

"May your highness pardon me," wrote Luther, "If I, a weak and despised man, presume to address you; or rather ascribe this boldness to the glory of the Gospel; for I cannot see that glorious light rising and shining in any quarter without exulting at the joyful sight It is my desire that my Lord Jesus Christ should gain many souls by the example of your most serene highness. And for this reason I desire to set our doctrine before you We believe that the commencement of salvation and the sum of Christianity is faith in Christ, who by his blood alone, and not by our works, has made atonement for sin, and put an end to the dominion of death. We believe that this faith is a gift of God, and that it is created by the Holy Ghost in our hearts, and not found by our own labours. For faith is a living thing, which spiritually begetteth the man, and maketh him a new creature."

Luther then proceeded to the consequences of faith, and showed how it could not be possessed without sweeping away the whole scaffolding of false doctrines and human works that the Church had so laboriously raised. "If grace," said he, "is obtained by Christ's blood, it is not by our own works. This is the reason why all the labours of all the cloisters are unavailing, and these institutions should be abolished, as being contrary to the blood of Jesus Christ, and leading men to trust in their own good works. Ingrafted in Christ, nothing remains for us but to do good, for having become good trees, we should bear witness to it by good fruits.

"Gracious prince and lord," said Luther in conclusion. "may your highness, who has made so happy a beginning, help to propagate [467]this doctrine; not with the power of the sword, which would injure the Gospel, but by inviting into your states learned doctors who may preach the Word. It is by the breath of his mouth that Jesus will destroy Antichrist, in order that, as Daniel says (chap. 8.ver. 25), he may be broken without hand. For this reason, most serene prince, may your highness fan the spark that has been kindled in your heart; may a flame go forth from the house of Savoy, as in former times from the house of Joseph; may all France be consumed like stubble before that fire; may it burn, blaze, and purify, so that this illustrious kingdom may truly be called most christian, for which it is indebted, up to this hour, solely to the rivers of blood shed in the service of Antichrist."

Thus did Luther endeavour to diffuse the Gospel in France. We are ignorant of the effect produced on the prince by this letter; but we do not see that he ever showed any desire to separate from Rome. In 1522, he requested Adrian VI to stand godfather to his eldest son; and, shortly after, the pope promised a cardinal's hat for his second son. Anemond, after making an effort to see the court and the Elector of Saxony, and having received a letter from Luther for this purpose, returned to Basle, more decided than ever to expose his life for the Gospel. In his ardor, he would have rejoiced to possess the power of rousing the whole of France. "All that I am," said he, "all that I shall be, all that I have, all that I shall have, I am determined to consecrate to the glory of God."

Anemond found his compatriot Farel at Basle. Anemond's letters had excited in him a great desire to see the reformers of Switzerland and Germany. Moreover, Farel required a sphere of activity in which he could more freely exert his strength. He therefore quitted that France which already offered nothing but scaffolds and the stake for the preachers of the unadulterated Gospel. Following byroads and concealing himself in the woods, he escaped, although with difficulty, from the hands of his enemies. Often had he lost his way. At last he reached Switzerland at the beginning of 1524. There he was destined to spend his life in the service of the Gospel,

and it was then that France began to send into Helvetia those noble-minded evangelists who were to establish the Reformation in Switzerland Romande, and to give it a new and powerful impulse in other parts of the confederation and in the whole world.

CHAPTER 10

Catholicity of the Reformation—Friendship between Farel and Oecolampadius—Farel and Erasmus—Altercation—Farel demands a Disputation—Theses—Scripture and Faith—Discussion

The catholicity of the Reformation is a noble feature in its character. The Germans pass into Switzerland; the French into Germany; in latter times men from England and Scotland pass over to the continent, and doctors from the continent into Great Britain. The reformers in the different countries spring up almost independently of one another; but no sooner are they born than they hold out the hand of fellowship. There is among them one sole faith, one spirit, one Lord. It had been an error, in our opinion, to write, as hitherto, the history of the Reformation for a single country; the work is one, and from their very origin the Protestant Churches form "a whole body, fitly jointed together."

Many refugees from France and Lorraine at this time formed at Basle a French Church, whose members had escaped from the scaffold. They had spoken there of Farel, of Lefevre, and of the occurrences at Meaux; and when the former arrived in Switzerland, he was already known as one of the most devoted champions of the Gospel.

He was immediately taken to Oecolampadius, who had returned to Basle Sometime before. Rarely does it happen that two men of more opposite character are brought together. Oecolampadius charmed by his mildness, Farel carried away his hearers by his impetuosity: but from the first moment these two men felt themselves united for ever. It was another meeting of a Luther and Melancthon. Oecolampadius received Farel into his house, gave him an humble chamber, a frugal table, and introduced him to his friends; and it was not long before the learning, piety, and courage of the young Frenchman gained every heart. Pellican, Imeli, Wolfhard, and other ministers of Basle felt themselves strengthened in the faith by his energetic language. Oecolampadius was at that time much depressed in spirit: "Alas!" said he to Zwingle, "I speak in vain, and see not the least reason to hope. Perhaps among the Turks I might meet with greater success! Alas!" added he with a deep sigh, "I lay the blame on myself alone." But the more he saw of Farel, the more his heart cheered up, and the courage he received from the Dauphinese became the ground-work of an undying affection. "O my dear Farel," said he, "I hope that the Lord will make our friendship immortal, and if we cannot live together here below, our joy will only be the greater when we shall be united at Christ's right hand in heaven." [468]

Pious and affecting thoughts! Farel's arrival was for Switzerland evidently a succor from on high.

But while this Frenchman was delighted with Oecolampadius, he shrank coldly and with noble pride from a man at whose feet all the nations of Christendom fell prostrate. The prince of the schools, he from whom every one coveted a word or a look, the master of the age—Erasmus—was neglected by Farel. The young Dauphinese had refused to go and pay homage to the old sage of Rotterdam, despising those men who are only by halves on the side of the truth, and who, though clearly aware of the consequences of error, are full of forbearance towards those who propagate it. Thus we witness in Farel that decision which has become one of the distinctive characters of the Reformation in France and French Switzerland, and which some have called stiffness, exclusiveness, and intolerance. A controversy, arising out of the commentaries of the doctor of Etaples, had begun between the two great doctors of the age, and at every entertainment the guests would take part with Erasmus against Lefevre, and Lefevre against Erasmus. Farel hesitated not to take his master's side. But what had especially annoyed him was the cowardice of the philosopher of Rotterdam with regard to the evangelical Christians. Erasmus shut his door against them. Good! Farel will not go and beg for admission. This was a trifling sacrifice to him, as he felt that Erasmus possessed not that piety of heart which is the foundation of all true theology. "Frobenius's wife knows more of theology than he does," said Farel; and indignant at the conduct of Erasmus, who had written advising the pope how to set about extinguishing the Lutheran conflagration, he boldly affirmed that Erasmus desired to stifle the Gospel.

This independence in young Farel exasperated the illustrious scholar. Princes, kings, doctors, bishops, popes, reformers, priests, men of the world—all were ready to pay him their tribute of admiration; even Luther had treated him with a certain forbearance; and this Dauphinese, unknown to fame and an exile, dared brave his power. Such insolent freedom caused Erasmus more annoyance than the homage of the whole world could give him pleasure; and accordingly he neglected no opportunity of venting his ill humor on Farel; besides, by attacking so notorious a heretic, he was clearing himself in the eyes of the Romanists from all suspicion of heresy. "I have never met with any thing more false, more violent, and more seditious than this man," said he; "his heart is full of vanity, his tongue overflowing with malice." But the anger of Erasmus was not confined to Farel; it was directed against all the French refugees in Basle, whose frankness and decision offended him.

They had little respect of persons; and if the truth was not openly professed, they cared not for the man, however exalted might be his genius. They were possibly

wanting in some measure in the suavity of the Gospel; but their fidelity reminds us of the vigor of the ancient prophets; and it is gratifying to meet with men who do not bow down before what the world adores. Erasmus, amazed at this lofty disdain, complained of it to every one. "What!" wrote he to Melancthon, "shall we reject pontiffs and bishops, to have more cruel, scurvy, and furious tyrants in their place; for such it is that France has sent us."—"Some Frenchmen," wrote he to the pope's secretary, in a letter accompanying his book on Free Will, "are still more out of their wits than even the Germans. They have five expressions always in their mouths: Gospel, Word of God, Faith, Christ, Holy Ghost; and yet I doubt whether they be not urged on by the spirit of Satan." Instead of Farellus he would often write Fallicus, thus designating one of the frankest men of his day with the epithets of cheat and deceiver.

The vexation and anger of Erasmus were at their height, when it was reported to him that Farel had called him a Balaam. Farel believed that Erasmus, like this prophet, allowed himself (perhaps unconsciously) to be swayed by presents to curse the people of God. The learned Dutchman, unable longer to contain himself, resolved to chastise the impudent Dauphinese; and one day, as Farel was talking with several friends on the doctrines of Christianity in the presence of Erasmus, the latter, rudely interrupting him, said: "Why do you call me Balaam?" Farel, at first astonished by so abrupt a question, soon recovered himself and answered, that it was not he who had given him that title. On being pressed to name the offender, he said it was Du Blet of Lyons, a refugee at Basle like himself. "It may be he who made use of the word," replied Erasmus, "but it was you who taught him." And then, ashamed of having lost his temper, he quickly turned the conversation to another subject. "Why," said he to Farel, "do you assert that we ought not to invoke the saints? Is it because it is not enjoined in Holy Scripture?"—

"Yes!" replied the Frenchman.—"Well then!" resumed Erasmus, "I call upon you to [469] prove by Scripture that we ought to invoke the Holy Ghost." Farel made this simple and true reply: "If He is God, we must invoke Him."—"I dropped the conversation," says Erasmus, "for night was coming on." From that hour, whenever the name of Farel fell from his pen, he represented him as a hateful person, who ought by all means to be shunned. The reformer's letters, on the contrary, are full of moderation as regards Erasmus. The Gospel is milder than philosophy, even in the most fiery temper.

The evangelical doctrine already counted many friends in Basle, both in the council and among the people; but the doctors of the university opposed it to the utmost of their power. Oecolampadius, and Stor pastor of Liestal, had maintained

some theses against them. Farel thought it his duty also to profess in Switzerland the great principle of the evangelical school of Paris and of Meaux: The Word of God is all-sufficient. He requested permission of the university to maintain certain theses, "the rather to be reproved," added he, "if I am in error, than to teach others;" but the university refused.

Upon this Farel addressed the council; and the council issued a public notice that a christian man, named William Farel, having by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost drawn up certain articles in conformity with the Gospel, they had given him leave to maintain them in Latin. The university forbade all priests and students to be present at the disputation; but the council sent out a proclamation to the contrary effect.

The following are some of the thirteen propositions put forth by Farel: "Christ has given us the most perfect rule of life: no one has the right to take anything from it, or to add anything thereto.

"To live according to any other precepts than those of Christ, leads directly to impiety.

"The real ministry of priests is to attend to the ministering of the Word; and for them there is no higher dignity.

"To deprive the glad-tidings of Christ of their certainty, is to destroy them.

"He who hopes to be justified by his own power, and by his own merits, and not by faith, sets himself up as God.

"Jesus Christ, whom all things obey, is our polestar, and the only star that we ought to follow."

Thus did this "Frenchman" stand up in Basle. It was a child of the mountains of Dauphiny, brought up in Paris at the feet of Lefevre, who thus boldly set forth in that illustrious university of Switzerland, and in the presence of Erasmus, the great principles of the Reformation. Two leading ideas pervaded Farel's theses: one, that of a return to Holy Scripture; the other, of a return to faith: two things which the Papacy at the beginning of the 18th century distinctly condemned as impious and heretical in the famous constitution Unigenitus, and which, closely connected with each other, do in fact subvert the whole of the papal system. If faith in Christ is the beginning and end of Christianity, it follows that we must cleave to the Word of Christ, and not to the voice of the Church. Nay more: if faith in Christ unites souls, where is the

necessity of an external bond? Is it with croziers, bulls, and tiaras, that their holy unity is formed? Faith joins in spiritual and true unity all those in whose hearts it takes up its abode. Thus vanished at a single blow the triple delusion of meritorious works, human tradition, and false unity; and this is the sum of Roman Catholicism.

The disputation began in Latin. Farel and Oecolampadius set forth and proved their articles, calling repeatedly on their adversaries to reply; but not one of them appeared. These sophists as Oecolampadius terms them, acted the braggart,—but in dark holes and corners. The people, therefore, began to despise the cowardice of the priests and to detest their tyranny.

Thus Farel took his stand among the defenders of the Reformation. They were greatly delighted to see a Frenchman combine so much learning and piety, and already began to anticipate the noblest triumphs. "He is strong enough," said they, "to destroy the whole Sorbonne single-handed." His candour, sincerity, and frankness captivated every heart. But amidst all his activity, he did not forget that every mission should begin with our own souls. The gentle Oecolampadius made a compact with the ardent Farel, by which they mutually engaged to practice humility and meekness in their familiar conversations. These bold men, even on the field of battle, were fitting themselves for the duties of peace. It should be observed, however, that the impetuosity of a Luther and a Farel were necessary virtues. Some effort is required when the world is to be moved and the Church renovated. In our days we are too apt to forget this truth, which the meekest men then acknowledged. "There are certain men," wrote Oecolampadius to Luther when introducing Farel to him, "who would have his zeal against the enemies [470] of the truth more moderate; but I cannot help seeing in this same zeal an admirable virtue, which, if seasonable exerted, is no less needed than gentleness itself." Posterity had ratified the judgment of Oecolampadius.

In the month of May 1524, Farel, with some friends from Lyons, visited Schaffhausen, Zurich, and Constance. Zwingle and Myconius gladly welcomed this exile from France, and Farel remembered their kindness all his life. But in his return to Basle he found Erasmus and his other enemies at work, and received orders to quit the city. In vain did his friends loudly give utterance to their displeasure at such an abuse of authority; he was compelled to quit the territory of Switzerland, already at this early period, the asylum and refuge of the persecuted. "It is thus we exercise hospitality," said the indignant Oecolampadius, "we true children of Sodom!"

At Basle, Farel had contracted a close friendship with the Chevalier Esch, who resolved to bear him company, and they set out with letters for Luther and Capito

from Oecolampadius, to whom the doctor of Basle commended Farel as "that William who had toiled so much in the work of God." At Strasburg, Farel formed an intimacy with Capito, Bucer, and Hedio; but it does not appear that he went so far as Wittenberg.

CHAPTER 11

New Campaign—Farel's Call to the Ministry—An Outpost—Lyons—Sebville at Grenoble—Conventicles—Preaching at Lyons—Maigret in Prison—Margaret intimidated

God usually withdraws his servants from the field of battle, only to bring them back stronger and better armed. Farel and his friends of Meaux, Metz, Lyons, and Dauphiny, driven from France by persecution, had been retempered in Switzerland and Germany among the elder reformers; and now, like an army at first dispersed by the enemy, but immediately rallied, they were turning round and marching forward in the name of the Lord. It was not only on the frontiers that these friends of the Gospel were assembling; in France also they were regaining courage, and preparing to renew the attack. The bugles were already sounding the reveille; the soldiers were girding on their arms, and gathering together to multiply their attacks; their leaders were planning the order of battle; the signal, "Jesus, his Word, and his grace," more potent in the hour of battle than the sound of warlike music, filled all hearts with the same enthusiasm; and everything was preparing in France for a second campaign, to be signalised by new victories, and new and greater reverses.

Montbeliard was then calling for a labourer in the Gospel. The youthful Duke Ulrich of Wurtemberg, a violent and cruel prince, having been dispossessed of his states by the Swabian league in 1519, had taken refuge in this earldom, his only remaining possession. In Switzerland he became acquainted with the reformers; his misfortunes had proved salutary to him; and he took delight in the Gospel. Oecolampadius intimated to Farel that a door was opened at Montbeliard, and the latter secretly repaired to Basle.

Farel had not regularly entered on the ministry of the Word; but we find in him, at this period of his life, all that is necessary to constitute a minister of the Lord. He did not lightly and of his own prompting enter the service of the Church. "Considering my weakness," said he, "I should not have dared preach, waiting for the Lord to send more suitable persons." But God at this time addressed him in a threefold call. As soon as he had reached Basle, Oecolampadius, touched with the wants of France, entreated him to devote himself to it. "Behold," said he, "how little is Jesus Christ known to all those who speak the French language. Will you not give them some instruction in their own tongue, that they may better understand the Scriptures?" At the same time, the people of Montbeliard invited him among them, and the prince gave his consent to this call. Was not this a triple call from God? "I did not think," said he, "that it was lawful for me to resist. I obeyed in God's name." Concealed in the

house of Oecolampadius, struggling against the responsibility offered to him, and yet obliged to submit to so clear a manifestation of the will of God, Farel accepted this charge, and Oecolampadius set him apart, calling upon the name of the Lord, and addressing his friend in language full of wisdom. "The more you are inclined to violence," said he, "the more should you practice gentleness; temper your lion's courage with the meekness of the dove." Farel responded to this appeal with all his soul.

Thus Farel, once the zealous follower of the old Church, was about to become a servant of God in the new. If Rome imperatively requires in a valid ordination the imposition of the hands of a bishop [471] who descends from the apostles in uninterrupted succession, it is because she places human traditions above the Word of God. In every church where the authority of the Word is not absolute, some other authority must needs be sought. And then, what is more natural than to ask of the most venerated of God's ministers, that which they cannot find in God himself? If we do not speak in the name of Jesus Christ, is it not something at least to speak in the name of Saint John or of Saint Paul? He who speaks in the name of antiquity is stronger than the rationalist who speaks only in his own name.

But the christian minister has a still higher authority: he preaches, not because he descends for St. Chrysostom or St. Peter, but because the Word that he proclaims comes down from God himself. The idea of succession, venerable as it may appear, is not the less a human system, substituted for the system of God. In Farel's ordination there was no human succession. Nay more: we do not see in it that which is necessary in the Lord's fold, where everything should be done decently and in order, an whose God is not a God of confusion. He was not regularly ordained by the Church: but extraordinary times justify extraordinary measures. At this memorable epoch God himself interposed. He consecrated by marvellous dispensations those whom he called to the regeneration of the world. In Farel's ordination we see the infallible Word of God, given to a man of God, that he might bear it to the world,—the call of God and of the people,—the consecration of the heart, and a solemn appointment by one of the ministers of the Church; and all this was the best substitute of which his case admitted for the full and formal seal of the Church on his ministry. Farel took his departure for Montbeliard in company with Esch.

Farel thus found himself stationed as it were at an advanced post. Behind him, Basle and Strasburg supported him with their advice and their printing-presses; before him lay the provinces of Franche Comte, Burgundy, Lorraine, the Lyonnais, and the rest of France, where men of God were beginning to struggle against error in the midst of profound darkness. He immediately began to preach Jesus Christ, and

to exhort the faithful not to permit themselves to be turned aside from the Holy Scriptures either by threats or stratagems. Beginning, long before Calvin, the work that this reformer was to accomplish on a much larger scale, Farel was at Montbeliard, like a general on a hill whose piercing eye glances over the field of battle, cheering those who are actively engaged with the enemy, rallying those ranks which the impetuosity of the charge has broken, and animating by his courage those who hang back. Erasmus immediately wrote to his Roman-catholic friends, that a Frenchman, escaped from France, was making a great disturbance in these regions.

Farel's labours were not unfruitful. "On every side," wrote he to a fellow-countryman, "men are springing up who devote all their powers and their lives to extend Christ's kingdom as widely as possible." The friends of the Gospel gave thanks to God that his blessed Word shone brighter every day in all parts of France. The adversaries were astounded. "The faction," wrote Erasmus to the Bishop of Rochester, "is spreading daily, and is penetrating Savoy, Lorraine, and France."

For sometime Lyons appeared to be the centre of evangelical action within the kingdom, as Basle was without. Francis I, marching towards the south on an expedition against Charles V, had arrived in this city with his mother, his sister, and the court. Margaret brought with her many gentlemen devoted to the Gospel. "All other people she had removed from about her person," says a letter written at this time. While Francis I was hurrying through Lyons an army composed of 14,000 Swiss, 6000 French, and 1500 lances of the nobility, to repel the invasion of the imperialists into Provence; while this great city re-echoed with the noise of arms, the tramp of horses, and the sound of the trumpet, the friends of the Gospel were marching to more peaceful conquests. They desired to attempt in Lyons what they had been unable to do in Paris. Perhaps, at a distance from the Sorbonne and from the parliament, the Word of God might have freer course? Perhaps the second city in the kingdom was destined to become the first for the Gospel. Was it not there that about four centuries previously the excellent Peter Waldo had begun to proclaim the Divine Word? Even then he had shaken all France. And now that God had prepared everything for the emancipation of his Church, might there not be hopes of more extended and more decisive success? Thus the people of Lyons, who were not generally, indeed, "poor men," as in the twelfth century, were beginning more courageously to handle "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

Among those who surrounded Margaret was her almoner, Michael d'Arande. The duchess caused the Gospel to be publicly preached at Lyons; and Master Michael proclaimed the Word of God [472] with courage and purity before a great number of hearers, attracted partly by the charm that attends the glad tidings wherever they

are published, and partly also by the favour in which the preaching and the preacher were held by the king's beloved sister.

Anthony Papillon, a man of highly cultivated mind, an elegant Latin scholar, a friend of Erasmus, "the first in France for knowledge of the Gospel," accompanied the princess also. At Margaret's request he had translated Luther's work on monastic vows, "in consequence of which he had much ado with those Parisian vermin," says Sebville; but Margaret had protected him against the attacks of the Sorbonne, and procured him the appointment of headmaster of requests to the dauphin, with a seat in the Great Council. He was not less useful to the Gospel by his devotedness than by his prudence. A merchant, named Vaugris, and especially a gentleman named Anthony du Blet, a friend of Farel's, took the lead in the Reformation at Lyons. The latter person, a man of great activity, served as a bond of union between the Christians scattered throughout those countries, and placed them in communication with Basle. While the armed hosts of Francis I had merely passed through Lyons, the spiritual soldiers of Jesus Christ halted there with Margaret; and leaving the former to carry the war into Provence and the plains of Italy, they began the fight of the Gospel in Lyons itself.

But they did not confine their efforts to the city. They looked all around them; the campaign was opened on several points at the same time; and the Christians of Lyons encouraged by their exertions and their labours all those who confessed Christ in the surrounding provinces. They did more: they went and proclaimed it in places where it was as yet unknown. The new doctrine ascended the Saone, and an evangelist passed through the narrow and irregular streets of Macon. Michael d'Arande himself visited that place in 1524, and, aided by Margaret's name, obtained per mission to preach in this city, which was destined at a later period to be filled with blood, and become for ever memorable for its sauteries.

After exploring the districts of the Saone, the Christians of Lyons, ever on the watch, extended their incursions in the direction of the Alps. There was at Lyons a Dominican named Maigret, who had been compelled to quit Dauphiny, where he had boldly preached the new doctrine, and who earnestly requested that some one would go and encourage his brethren of Grenoble and Gap. Papillon and Du Blet repaired thither. A violent storm had just broken out there against Sebville and his preachings. The Dominicans had moved heaven and earth; and maddened at seeing so many evangelist escape them (as Farel, Anemond, and Maigret), they would fain have crushed those who remained within their reach. They therefore called for Sebville's arrest.

The friends of the Gospel in Grenoble were alarmed; must Sebville also be taken from them! Margaret interceded with her brother; many of the most distinguished personages at Grenoble, the king's advocate among others, open or secret friends to the Gospel, exerted themselves in behalf of the evangelical grayfriar, and at length their united efforts rescued him from the fury of his adversaries.

But if Sebville's life was saved, his mouth was stopped. "Remain silent," said they, "or you will be led to the scaffold."—"Silence has been imposed on me," he wrote to Anemond de Coct, "under pain of death." These threats alarmed even those of whom the most favorable hopes had been entertained. The king's advocate and other friends of the Gospel now showed nothing but coldness. Many returned to the Romish worship, pretending to adore God secretly in their hearts, and to give a spiritual signification to the outward observances of Romanism.

A melancholy delusion, leading from infidelity to infidelity. There is no hypocrisy that cannot be justified in the same manner. The unbeliever, by means of his systems of myths and allegories, will preach Christ from the christian pulpit; and a philosopher will be able, by a little ingenuity, to find in an abominable superstition among the pagans, the type of a pure and elevated idea. In religion the first thing is truth. Some of the Grenoble Christians, among whom were Amadeus Galbert, and a cousin of Anemond's, still clung fast to their faith. These pious men would meet secretly with Sebville at each other's houses, and talk together about the Gospel. They repaired to some secluded spot; they visited some brother by night; or met in secret to pray to Christ, as thieves lurking for a guilty purpose. Often would a false alarm disturb the [473] humble assembly. The adversaries consented to wink at these secret conventicles; but they had sworn that the stake should be the lot of anyone who ventured to speak of the Word of God in public.

Such was the state of affairs when Du Blet and Papillon arrived at Grenoble. Finding that Sebville had been silenced, they exhorted him to go and preach the Gospel at Lyons. The Lent of the following year would present a favourable opportunity for proclaiming the Gospel to a numerous crowd. Michael d'Arande, Maigret, and Sebville, proposed to fight at the head of the Gospel army. Everything was thus preparing for a striking manifestation of evangelical truth in the second city of France. The rumour of this evangelical Lent extended as far as Switzerland. "Sebville is free, and will preach the Lent sermons at Saint Paul's in Lyons," wrote Anemond to Farel. But a great disaster, which threw all France into confusion, intervened and prevented this spiritual combat. It is during peace that the conquests of the Gospel are achieved. The defeat of Pavia, which took place in the month of February, disconcerted the daring project of the reformers.

Meantime, without waiting for Sebville, Maigret had begun early in the winter to preach salvation by Jesus Christ alone, in despite of the strenuous opposition of the priests and monks of Lyons. In these sermons there was not a word of the worship of the creature, of saints, of the virgin, of the power of the priesthood. The great mystery of godliness, "God manifest in the flesh," was alone proclaimed. The old heresies of the poor men of Lyons are reappearing, it was said, and in a more dangerous form than ever! But notwithstanding this opposition, Maigret continued his ministry; the faith that animated his soul found utterance in words of power: it is in the nature of truth to embolden the hearts of those who have received it. Yet Rome was destined to prevail at Lyons as at Grenoble. Maigret was arrested, notwithstanding Margaret's protection, dragged through the streets, and cast into prison. \

The merchant Vaugris, who then quitted the city on his road to Switzerland, spread the news everywhere on his passage. All were astonished and depressed. One thought, however, gave confidence to the friends of the Reformation: "Maigret is taken," said they, "but Madame d'Alencon is there; praised be God!" It was not long before they were compelled to renounce even this hope. The Sorbonne had condemned several of this faithful minister's propositions. Margaret, whose position became daily more difficult, found the boldness of the partisans of the Reformation and the hatred of the powerful increasing side by side. Francis I began to grow impatient at the zeal of these evangelists: he looked upon them as mere fanatics whom it was good policy to repress. Margaret, thus fluctuating between desire to serve her brethren and her inability to protect them, sent them word to avoid running into fresh dangers, as she could no longer intercede with the king in their favour. The friends of the Gospel believed that this determination was not irrevocable. "God has given her grace," said they, "to say and write only what is necessary to poor souls." But if this human support is taken away, Christ still remains. It is well that the soul should be stripped of all other protection, that it may rely upon God alone.

CHAPTER 12

The French at Basle—Encouragement of the Swiss—Fears of Discord—Translating and Printing at Basle—Bibles and Tracts disseminated in France

The exertions of the friends of the Gospel in France were paralyzed. The men in power were beginning to show their hostility to Christianity; Margaret was growing alarmed; terrible news would soon be coming across the Alps and plunging the nation into mourning, filling it with one thought only—of saving the king, of saving France. But if the Christians of Lyons were checked in their labours, were there not soldiers at Basle who had escaped from the battle and who were ready to begin the fight again. The exiles from France have never forgotten her. Driven from their country for nearly three centuries by the fanaticism of Rome, their latest descendants have been seen carrying to the cities and fields of their ancestors those treasures of which the pope still deprives them. At the very moment when the soldiers of Christ in France were mournfully laying down their arms, the refugees at Basle were preparing for the combat. As they saw the monarchy of Saint Louis and of Charlemagne falling from the hands of Francis I, shall they not feel urged to lay hold of a kingdom which cannot be moved.

Farel, Anemond, Esch, Toussaint, and their friends formed an evangelical society in Switzerland with the view of rescuing their country from its spiritual darkness. Intelligence reached them from every quarter, that there was an increasing thirst for God's Word in[474]

France; it was desirable to take advantage of this, and to water and sow while it was yet seedtime. Oecolampadius, Zwingle, and Oswald Myconius, were continually exhorting them to do this, giving the right hand of fellowship, and communicating to them a portion of their own faith. In January 1525, the Swiss schoolmaster wrote to the French chevalier: "Banished as you are from your country by the tyranny of Antichrist, even your presence among us proves that you have acted boldly in the cause of the Gospel. The tyranny of christian bishops will at length induce the people to look upon them as deceivers. Stand firm; the time is not far distant when we shall enter the haven of repose, whether we be struck down by our tyrants, or they themselves be struck down; all then will be well for us, provided we have been faithful to Christ Jesus."

These encouragements were of great value to the French refugees; but a blow inflicted by these very Christians of Switzerland and Germany, who sought to cheer them, cruelly wrung their hearts. Recently escaped from the scaffold or the burning

pile, they saw with dismay the evangelical Christians on the other side of the Rhine disturbing the repose they enjoyed by their lamentable differences. The discussions on the Lord's Supper had begun. Deeply moved and agitated, feeling strongly the necessity of brotherly unity, the French would have made every sacrifice to conciliate these divided sentiments. This became their leading idea. At the epoch of the Reformation, none had greater need than they of christian unity; of this Calvin was afterwards a proof. "Would to God that I might purchase peace, concord, and union in Jesus Christ at the cost of my life, which in truth is of little worth," said Peter Toussaint. The French, whose discernment was correct and prompt, saw immediately that these rising dissensions would check the work of the Reformation. "All things would go on more prosperously than many persons imagine, if we were but agreed among ourselves. Numbers would gladly come to the light; but when they see these divisions among the learned, they stand hesitating and confused."

The French were the first to suggest conciliatory advances. "Why," wrote they from Strasburg, "is not Bucer or some other learned man sent to Luther? The longer we wait the greater will these dissensions become." Their fears grew stronger every day. At length, finding all their exertions of no avail, these Christians mournfully turned their eyes away from Germany, and fixed them solely upon France.

France—the conversion of France, thenceforth exclusively occupied the hearts of these generous men whom history, that has inscribed on her pages the names of so many individuals vainly puffed up with their own glory, has for three centuries passed over in silence. Thrown on a foreign land, they fell on their knees, and daily, in silence and obscurity, invoked God in behalf of the country of their forefathers. Prayer was the power by which the Gospel spread through the kingdom, and the great instrument by which the conquests of the Reformation were gained.

But these Frenchmen were not merely men of prayer: never has the evangelical army contained combatants more ready to sacrifice their lives in the day of battle. They felt the importance of scattering the Holy Scriptures and pious books in their country, still overshadowed with the gloom of superstition. A spirit of inquiry was breathing over the whole kingdom: it seemed necessary on all sides to spread the sails to the wind. Anemond, ever prompt in action, and Michael Bentin, a refugee like himself, resolved to unite their zeal, their talents, their resources, and their labours. Bentin wished to establish a printing press at Basle, and the chevalier, to profit by the little German he knew, to translate the best works of the Reformers into French. "Oh," said they, rejoicing in their plans, "would to God that France were filled with evangelical volumes, so that everywhere, in the cottages of the poor, in the palaces of

the nobles, in cloisters and presbyteries, nay, in the inmost sanctuary of the heart, a powerful testimony might be borne to the grace of Jesus Christ!"

Funds were necessary for such an undertaking, and the refugees had nothing. Vaugris was then at Basle; on his departure Anemond gave him a letter for the brethren of Lyons, many of whom abounded in the riches of this world, and who, although oppressed, were faithful to the Gospel; he requested them to send him some assistance; but that did not suffice; the French wished to establish several presses at Basle, that should be worked night and day, so as to inundate France with the Word of God. At Meaux, at Metz, and in other places, were men rich and powerful enough to support this enterprise. No one could address Frenchmen with so much authority as Farel himself, and it was to him that Anemond applied.

It does not appear that the chevalier's project was realised, but the work was done by others. The presses of Basle were constantly [475] occupied in printing French works; they were forwarded to Farel, and by him introduced into France with unceasing activity. One of the first writings sent by this Religious Tract Society was Luther's Explanation of the Lord's Prayer. "We are retailing the Pater at four deniers of Basle each," wrote Vaugris to Farel, "but we sell them wholesale at the rate of two florins the two hundred, which comes to something less."

Anemond sent to Farel from Basle all the useful books that appeared or that arrived from Germany; at one time a work on the appointment of Gospel ministers, at another a treatise on the education of children. Farel examined these works; he composed, translated or got others to translate them into French, and seemed at one and the same time entirely devoted to active exertions and to the labours of the study. Anemond urged on and superintended the printing; and these epistles, prayers, books, and broadsheets, were the means of the regeneration of the age. While profligacy descended from the throne, and darkness from the steps of the alter, these unnoticed writings alone diffused throughout the nation beams of light and seeds of holiness.

But it was especially God's Word that the evangelical merchant of Lyons was calling for in the name of his fellow-countrymen. These people of the sixteenth century, so hungering for intellectual food, were to receive in their own tongue those ancient monuments of the first ages of the world, in which the new breath of primitive humanity respires, and those holy oracles of the Gospel times in which shines forth the fullness of the revelation of Christ. Vaugris wrote to Farel: "I beseech you, if possible, to have the New Testament translated by some person who can do it efficiently: it would be a great blessing for France, Burgundy, and Savoy. And if you

want proper type, I will have some brought from Paris or Lyons; but if there be any good types at Basle, it will be all the better."

Lefevre had already published at Meaux, but in detached portions, the books of the New Testament in French. Vaugris wished for some one to revise it thoroughly, and to superintend a complete edition. Lefevre undertook to do so, and he published it, as we have already seen, on the 12th of October 1524. An uncle of Vaugris, named Conrard, also a refugee at Basle, immediately procured a copy. The Chevalier Coct happening to be at a friend's house on the 18th of November, there saw the book, and was filled with joy. "Lose no time in reprinting it," said he, "for I doubt not a great number will be called for."

Thus was the Word of God offered to France in opposition to the traditions of the Church, which Rome still continues to present to her. "How can we distinguish what is of man in your traditions, and what is of God," said the reformers, "except by the Scriptures of God? The maxims of the Fathers, the decretals of the pontiffs, cannot be the rule of our faith. They show us what was the opinion of these old doctors; but the Word alone teaches us what is the judgment of God. We must submit everything to the rule of Scripture."

Such were the principal means by which these writings were circulated. Farel and his friends consigned the books to certain pedlars or colporteurs, simple and pious men, who, laden with their precious burden, passed from town to town, from village to village, and from house to house, in Franche Comte, Lorraine, Burgundy, and the adjoining provinces, knocking at every door. They procured the books at a low rate, "that they might be the more eager to sell them." Thus as early as 1524 there existed in Basle a Bible society, a tract society, and an association of colporteurs, for the benefit of France. It is a mistake to conceive that these efforts date only from our own age; they go back in essentials not only to the times of the Reformation, but still farther to the primitive ages of the Church.

CHAPTER 13

Progress at Montbeliard—Resistance and Commotion—Toussaint leaves Oecolampadius—The Image of Saint Anthony—Death of Anemond—Strasburg—Lambert's Letter to Francis I—Successive Defeats

The attention which Farel bestowed on France did not divert his attention from the place where he was residing. Arriving at Montbeliard about the end of July 1524, he had hardly sown the seed, before the first fruits of the harvest (to use the words of Oecolampadius) began to appear. Farel wrote to his friend with great exultation. "It is an easy thing," replied the doctor of Basle, "to instil a few dogmas into the ears of our auditors; but to change their hearts is in the power of God alone."

The Chevalier de Coct, delighted with this intelligence, ran with his usual vivacity to Peter Toussaint. "I shall set off to-morrow to visit Farel," said he hastily. Toussaint, more calm, was writing to the evangelist of Montbeliard: "Be careful," said he to Farel; "you [476] are engaged in an important cause; it must not be polluted by the counsels of men. The mighty ones promise you their favour, their support, and heaps of gold But to put your trust in these things, is deserting Christ and walking in darkness." Toussaint was finishing this letter when the chevalier entered; the latter took it and departed for Montbeliard.

He found the city in great commotion. Many of the nobles were alarmed, and said as they looked contemptuously at Farel: "What does this sorry fellow want with us? Would to God he had never come! He cannot stay here, for he will ruin us all, as well as himself." The lords who had taken refuge with the duke at Montbeliard, feared that the disturbance, which everywhere accompanied the Reformation, would attract the attention of Ferdinand and Charles V, and that they would be expelled from their last asylum. But it was the clergy in particular who resisted Farel. The superior of the Franciscans of Besancon had hastened to Montbeliard, and formed a plan of defence in conjunction with the clergy of the place. On the following Sunday, Farel had hardly begun to preach, before they interrupted him, calling him liar and heretic. In an instant the whole assembly was in an uproar. The audience rose up, and called for silence. The duke hurried to the spot, seized both Farel and the superior, and ordered the latter either to prove or to retract his charges. The Franciscan adopted the last alternative, and an official account of the whole affair was published.

This attack excited Farel all the more; he thought it was now his duty to unmask without scruple those interested priests; and drawing the sword of the Word, he plied it vigorously. He was more inclined to imitate Jesus when he expelled the money-

changers from the temple and overthrew their tables, than when the spirit of prophecy declared of him: He shall neither strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. Oecolampadius was affrighted. These two men were perfect types of two characters diametrically opposed to each other, and yet both worthy of admiration. "You were sent," wrote Oecolampadius to Farel, "to draw men gently to the truth, and not to drag them with violence; to spread the Gospel, and not to curse them. Physicians resort to amputation only when other means have failed. Act the part of a physician, and not of an executioner. It is not enough, in my opinion, to be gentle towards the friends of the Gospel; you must likewise gain over the adversaries. If the wolves are driven from the sheepfold, let the sheep at least hear the voice of the shepherd. Pour oil and wine into the wounds, and conduct yourself as an evangelist, not as a judge or a tyrant."

The report of these labours spread into France and Lorraine, and the Sorbonne and the Cardinal Guise were beginning to be alarmed at this meeting of refugees at Basle and Montbeliard. They would willingly have broken up a troublesome alliance; for error knows no greater triumph than when attracting some deserter to its standard. Already had Martial Mazurier and others given the papal party in France an opportunity of rejoicing over shameful defections; but if they could succeed in seducing one of these confessors of Christ, who had taken refuge on the banks of the Rhine, and who had suffered so much for the name of the Lord, how great would be the victory for the Roman hierarchy! They therefore planted their batteries, and the youngest of these refugees was the object of their attack.

The dean, the Cardinal of Lorraine, and all those who joined the crowded meetings held in this prelate's mansion, deplored the sad fate of Peter Toussaint, who had once promised so fair. He is at Basle, said they, in the house of Oecolampadius, living with one of the leaders of this heresy! They wrote to him with fervour, and as if they would rescue him from eternal condemnation. These letters were the more painful to the young man, because he could not help recognizing in them the marks of sincere affection. One of his relations, probably the dean himself, urged him to remove to Paris, to Metz, or to any other place in the world, provided it were far away from these Lutherans. This relation, bearing in mind all that Toussaint owed to him, doubted not that he would immediately comply; but when he found his efforts useless, his affection changed into violent hatred. At the same time this resistance exasperated the whole family and all his friends against the young refugee. They went to his mother, who was "under the power of the monks;" the priests crowded round her, frightening and persuading her that her son had committed crimes that they could not mention without shuddering. Upon this the afflicted mother wrote a touching letter to her son, "full of weeping" (said he), and in which she described her

misery in heart-rending language. "Oh! wretched mother!" said she, "Oh! unnatural son! cursed be the breasts that suckled thee, and the knees that bare thee!"

The unhappy Toussaint was distracted: What should he do? He could not return into France. By leaving Basle and going to Zurich [477] or Wittenberg, beyond the reach of his family, he would only add to their sorrow. Oecolampadius advised a middle course: "Leave my house," said he. With a heart full of sadness, he adopted the suggestion, and went to live with an ignorant and obscure priest, one well adapted to reassure his relations. What a change for Toussaint! He never met his host save at meals, at which times they were continually discussing matters of faith; and as soon as the repast was over, Toussaint retired to his chamber, where alone, far from noise and controversy, he carefully studied the Word of God. "The Lord is my witness," said he, "that in this valley of tears I have but one desire, that of seeing Christ's kingdom extended, so that all with one mouth may glorify God."

One circumstance occurred which consoled Toussaint. The enemies of the Gospel were daily growing stronger in Metz. At his entreaty, the Chevalier d'Esch departed in the mouth of January 1525, to encourage the evangelical Christians in this city. He traversed the forests of the Vosges, and reached the place where Leclerc had laid down his life, carrying with him several books with which Farel had provided him.

It was not only to Lorraine that these Frenchmen turned their eyes. The Chevalier de Coct received letters from one of Farel's brothers, depicting the state of Dauphiny in the gloomiest colours. He carefully avoided showing them lest he should alarm the weakhearted, and was content with ardently seeking from God the support of his almighty hands. In December 1524, Peter Verrier, a Dauphinese messenger arrived on horseback at Montbeliard with commissions for Anemond and Farel. The chevalier, with his usual vivacity, immediately resolved on returning to France. "If Peter has brought any money," wrote he to Farel, "keep it; if he has brought any letters, open and copy them, and then forward them to me. Do not, however, sell the horse, but take care of it, for perchance I may need it. I am inclined to enter France secretly, and go to Jacobus Faber (Lefevre) and Arandius. Write and tell me what you think of it."

Such was the confidence and open-heartedness that existed between these refugees. The one opened the other's letters, and received his money. It is true that de Coct was already indebted thirtysix crowns to Farel, whose purse was always open to his friends. There was more zeal than discretion in the chevalier's desire to reenter France. He was of too imprudent a character not to expose himself to certain death.

This Farel no doubt explained to him. He left Basle, and withdrew to a small town, where he had "great hopes of acquiring the German language, God willing."

Farel continued preaching the Gospel in Montbeliard. His soul was vexed as he beheld the majority of the people in this city entirely given up to the worship of images. It was, in his opinion, a revival of the old pagan idolatry.

Yet the exhortations of Oecolampadius, and the fear of compromising the truth, would perhaps have long restrained him, but for an unforeseen circumstance. One day about the end of February (it was the feast of Saint Anthony) Farel was walking on the banks of a little river that runs through the city, beneath a lofty rock on which the citadel is built, when, on reaching the bridge, he met a procession, which was crossing it, reciting prayers to St. Anthony, and headed by two priests bearing the image of this saint. Farel suddenly found himself face to face with these superstitions, without, however, having sought for them. A violent struggle took place in his soul. Shall he give way? shall he hide himself? Would not this be a cowardly act of unbelief? These lifeless images, borne on the shoulders of ignorant priests, made his blood boil. Farel boldly advanced, snatched the shrine of the holy hermit from the priest's arms, and threw it over the bridge into the river. And then, turning to the awe-stricken crowd, he exclaimed: "Poor idolaters, will ye never forsake your idolatry!"

The priests and people stood motionless with astonishment. A religious fear seemed to rivet them to the spot. But they soon recovered from their stupor. "The image is drowning," exclaimed one of the crowd; and transports and shouts of rage succeeded their deathlike silence. The multitude would have rushed on the sacrilegious wretch who had just thrown the object of their adoration into the water. But Farel, we know not how, escaped their violence.

There is a reason, we are aware, to regret that the reformer should have been hurried into the commission of an act that tended rather to check the progress of the truth. No one should think himself authorized to attack with violence any institution sanctioned by the public authority. There is, however, in the zeal of the reformer something more noble than that cold prudence so common among men, which shrinks before the least danger, and fears to make the least sacrifice for the advancement of God's kingdom. Farel was not [478]ignorant that by this proceeding he was exposing himself to the fate of Leclerc. But his own conscience bore witness that he desired only to promote the glory of God, and this made him superior to all fear.

After this affair of the bridge, which is a characteristic feature in Farel's history, the reformer was obliged to hide himself, and he quitted the town soon after. He took

refuge at Basle with Oecolampadius; but ever preserved that attachment for Montbeliard which a servant of God never ceases to entertain for the first fruits of his ministry.

Sad tidings awaited Farel at Basle. If he was a fugitive, his friend Anemond de Coct was seriously ill. Farel immediately sent him four gold crowns; but a letter written by Oswald Myconius on the 25th of March, announced the death of the chevalier. "Let us so live," said Oswald, "that we may enter into that rest into which we hope the soul of Anemond has already entered."

Thus did Anemond descend to a premature grave; still young, full of activity and strength, willing to undertake every labour to evangelise France, and who was in himself a host. God's ways are not our ways. Not long before, and in the neighbourhood of Zurich, another chevalier, Ulrich Hutten, had breathed his last. There is some similarity in the characters of the German and French knights, but the piety and christian virtues of the Dauphinese place him far above the witty and intrepid enemy of the pope and of the monks.

Shortly after Anemond's death, Farel, unable to remain in Basle, whence he had been once banished, joined his friends Capito and Bucer at Strasburg.

Strasburg, an imperial city, at whose head was Sturm, one of the most distinguished men in Germany, and which contained many celebrated doctors within its walls, was as it were an advanced post of the Reformation, thrown beyond the Rhine, and in which the persecuted Christians of France and Lorraine took refuge, and from whence they hoped to win these countries to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Lambert's pious ambition was to become for France what Luther was for Germany, and accordingly he had no sooner reached Strasburg after quitting Metz, than he made his preparations, waiting for the moment when he should be enabled to carry the sword of the Gospel into the very heart of that country which he loved so tenderly.

He first appealed to Frances I. "The pope," said he, "if he had his way, would change every king into a beggar. Lend your ear to the truth, most excellent prince, and God will make you great among the princes of the earth. Woe be to all the nations whose master is the pope. Oh, Avignon, city of my birth, art thou not the wretched daughter of Babylon? Given over to a legate, not of holiness, but of impiety and heresy; thou seest lewd sports, immodest dances, and adultery multiply within thy walls, and all around thy fields are laid waste by daily hunting parties, and thy poor labourers oppressed.

"O most christian king, thy people thirst for the Word of God." At the same time addressing the pope, he said, "Erelong that powerful France which thou are wont to call thy arm will separate from thee." Such were Lambert's illusions!

Finding that his epistle had produced no effect, he wrote a second in a still more earnest tone. "What!" said he, "the Arabians, Chaldeans, Greeks, and Jews possess the Word of God in their own language, and the French, Germans, Italians, and Spaniards cannot have it in theirs! Let God but speak to the nations in the language of the people, and the empire of pride will crumble into dust."

These anticipations were not realised. At Montbeliard and Basle, as at Lyons, the ranks of the reformers had suffered. Some of the most devoted combatants had been taken off by death, others by persecution and exile. In vain did the warriors of the Gospel mount everywhere to the assault; everywhere they were beaten back. But if the forces they had concentrated, first at Meaux, then at Lyons, and afterwards at Basle, were dispersed in succession, there still remained combatants here and there, who in Lorraine, at Meaux, and even in Paris, struggled more or less openly to uphold the Word of God in France. Though the Reformation saw its columns broken, it still had its isolated champions. Against these the Sorbonne and the parliament were about to turn their anger. They would not have remaining on the soil of France, a single one of these noble minded men who had undertaken to plant in it the standard of Jesus Christ; and unheard of misfortunes seemed now to be conspiring with the enemies of the Reformation, and to aid them in the accomplishment of their task.

CHAPTER 14

Francis made Prisoner at Pavia—Reaction against the Reformation—Margaret's Anxiety for her Brother—Louisa consults the Sorbonne—Commission against the Heretics—Briconnet brought to Trial—Appeal to the Parliament—Fall—Recantation—Lefevre accused—Condemnation and Flight—Lefevre at Strasburg—Louis Berquin imprisoned—Erasmus attacked—Schuch at Nancy—His Martyrdom—Struggle with Caroli—Sorrow of Pavanne—His Martyrdom—A Christian Hermit—Concourse at Notre Dame

During the latter period of Farel's sojourn at Montbeliard, great events were passing on the theatre of the world. Lannoy and Pescara, Charles's generals, having quitted France on the approach of Francis I, this prince had crossed the Alps, and blockaded Pavia. On the 24th of February 1525, he was attacked by Pescara. Bonnivet, La Tremouille, Palisse, and Lescure died fighting round their sovereign. The Duke of Alencon, Margaret's husband, the first prince of the blood, had fled with the rear-guard, and gone to die of shame and grief at Lyons; and Francis, thrown from his horse, had surrendered his sword to Charles Lannoy, vice-roy of Naples, who received it kneeling. The King of France was prisoner to the emperor. His captivity seemed the greatest of misfortunes. "Nothing is left me but honour and life," wrote the king to his mother. But no one felt a keener sorrow than Margaret. The glory of her country tarnished, France without a monarch and exposed to the greatest dangers, her beloved brother the captive of his haughty enemy, her husband dishonoured and dead What bitter thoughts were these! But she had a comforter; and while her brother to console himself repeated: "Tout est perdu, fors l'honneur, all is lost save honour!" she was able to say:—Fors Jesus seul, mon frere, fils de Dieu! Save Christ alone, dear brother, Son of God!

Margaret thought that in the hour of trial Francis might receive the Word of God. A few months before, the king had already betrayed religious sentiments on the death of his daughter the Princess Charlotte. The Duchess of Alencon, having concealed the child's sickness from him, Francis, who no doubt suspected something, dreamed three several times that his daughter said to him: "Farewell, my king, I am going to paradise." He guessed that she was dead, and gave way to "extreme grief," but wrote to his sister that "he would rather die than desire to have her in this world contrary to the will of God, whose name be blessed."

Margaret thought that the terrible disaster of Pavia would complete what the first trial had begun; and most earnestly desiring that the Word of God might be with Francis in his prison, she wrote a very touching letter, which deserves to be preserved,

to Marshal Montmorency, who had been taken prisoner along with the king. It is very probable that she speaks of herself and Bishop Briconnet in the graceful allegory which serves as an introduction to her request:— "Dear cousin, there is a certain very devout hermit who for these three years past has been constantly urging a man whom I know to pray to God for the king, which he has done; and he is assured that if it pleases the king by way of devotion, daily, when in his closet, to read the epistles of St. Paul, he will be delivered to the glory of God; for He promises in His Gospel, that whosoever loveth the truth, the truth shall make him free. And forasmuch as I think he has them not, I send you mine, begging you to entreat him on my part that he will read them, and I firmly believe that the Holy Ghost, which abideth in the letter, will do by him as great things as he has done by those who wrote them; for God is not less powerful or good than He has been, and his promises never deceive. He has humbled you by captivity, but he has not forsaken you, giving you patience and hope in his goodness, which is always accompanied by consolation and a more perfect knowledge of Him, which I am sure is better than the king ever knows, having his mind less at liberty, on account of the
imprisonment of the body."Your good Cousin, Margaret."

In such language did Margaret of Valois, full of anxiety for the salvation of her brother's soul, address the king after the battle of Pavia. It is unfortunate that her letter and the Epistles of St. Paul were not sent direct to Francis; she could not have selected a worse medium than Montmorency.

The letters which the king wrote from the Castle of Pizzighitone, where he was confined, afforded his sister some little consolation. At the beginning of April she wrote to him: "After the sorrow of the Passion this has been a Holy Ghost (i.e. a Pentecost), seeing the grace that our Lord has shown you." But unhappily the prisoner did not find in the Word of God that truth which maketh free, and which Margaret so earnestly desired he might possess.

All France, princes, parliament, and people, was overwhelmed with consternation. Erelong, as in the first three ages of the Church, the calamity that had befallen the country was imputed to the Christians; and fanatical cries were heard on every side calling for blood, as a means of averting still greater disasters. The moment, therefore, was favourable; it was not enough to have dislodged the evangelical

Christians from the three strong positions they had taken; it was [480] necessary to take advantage of the general panic, to strike while the iron was hot, and sweep

the whole kingdom clear of that opposition which had become so formidable to the papacy.

At the head of this conspiracy and of these clamours were Beda, Duchesne, and Lecouturier. These irreconcilable enemies of the Gospel flattered themselves they might easily obtain from public terror the victims that had been hitherto refused them. They instantly employed every device; conversations, fanatical harangues, lamentations, threats, defamatory writings, to excite the anger of the nation, and particularly of their governors. They vomited fire and flame against their adversaries, and covered them with the most scurrilous abuse. All means were good in their eyes; they picked out a few words here and there, neglecting the context that might explain the passage quoted; substituted expressions of their own for those of the doctors they criminated, and omitted or added, according as it was necessary to blacken their adversaries' characters. We have this on the testimony of Erasmus himself.

Nothing excited their wrath so much as the fundamental doctrine of Christianity and of the Reformation,—salvation by grace. "When I see these three men," said Beda, "Lefevre, Erasmus, and Luther, in other respects endowed with so penetrating a genius, uniting and conspiring against meritorious works, and resting all the weight of salvation on faith alone, I am no longer astonished that thousands of men, seduced by these doctrines, have learned to say: 'Why should I fast and mortify my body?' Let us banish from France this hateful doctrine of grace. This neglect of good works is a fatal delusion from the devil."

In such language did the Syndic of the Sorbonne endeavour to fight against the faith. He was destined to find supporters in a debauched court, and in another part of the nation more respectable, but not less opposed to the Gospel; I mean those grave men, those rigid moralists, who, devoted to the study of laws and forms of jurisprudence, regard Christianity as no more than a system of legislation; the Church, as a moral police; and who, unable to adapt to those principles of jurisprudence which absorb their whole thoughts the doctrines of the spiritual inability of man, of the new birth, and of justification by faith, look upon them as fanciful dreams, dangerous to public morals and the prosperity of the state. This hostile tendency to the doctrine of grace was manifested in the sixteenth century by two very different excesses; in Italy and Poland by the doctrine of Socinus, the descendant of an illustrious family of lawyers at Sienna; and in France by the persecuting decrees and burning piles of the parliament.

The parliament, in fact, despising the great truths of the Gospel which the reformers announced, and thinking themselves called upon to do something in so

overwhelming a catastrophe, presented an address to Louisa of Savoy, full of strong remonstrances on the conduct of the government with regard to the new doctrine. "Heresy," said they, "has raised its head among us, and the king, by neglecting to bring the heretics to the scaffold, has drawn down the wrath of heaven upon the nation."

At the same time the pulpits resounded with lamentations, threats, and maledictions; prompt and exemplary punishments were loudly called for. Martial Mazurier was particularly distinguished among the preachers of Paris; and endeavouring by his violence to efface the recollection of his former connection with the partisans of the Reformation, he declaimed against the "secret disciples of Luther." "Do you know the rapid operation of this poison?" exclaimed he. "Do you know its potency? Well may we tremble for France; as it works with inconceivable activity, and in a short time may destroy thousands of souls."

It was not difficult to excite the regent against the partisans of the Reformation. Her daughter Margaret, the first personage of the court, Louisa of Savoy herself, who had always been so devoted to the Roman pontiff, were pointed at by certain fanatics as countenancing Lefevre, Berquin, and the other innovators. Had she not read their tracts and their translations of the Bible? The queen-mother desired to clear herself of such outrageous suspicions. Already she had despatched her confessor to the Sorbonne to consult that body on the means of extirpating this heresy. "The damnable doctrine of Luther," said she to the faculty, "is every day gaining new adherents." The faculty smiled on the receipt of this message. Till then, its representations had not been listened to, and now their advice was humbly solicited in the matter. At length they held within their grasp that heresy they had so long desired to stifle. They commissioned Noel Beda to return an immediate answer to the regent.

"Seeing that the sermons, the discussions, the books with which we have so often opposed heresy, have failed in destroying it," said the fanatical syndic, "all the writings of the heretics should be prohibited by a royal proclamation; and if this means does not suffice, we must employ force and constraint against the persons of these false doctors; for those who resist the light must be subdued [481] by torture and by terror."

But Louisa had not waited for this reply. Francis had scarcely fallen into the hands of the emperor before she wrote to the pope to know his pleasure concerning the heretics. It was of great importance to Louisa's policy to secure the favour of a pontiff who could raise all Italy against the victor of Pavia, and she was ready to conciliate him at the cost of a little French blood. The pope, delighted that he could

wreak his vengeance in the "most christian kingdom" against a heresy that he could not destroy either in Switzerland or Germany, gave immediate orders for the introduction of the Inquisition into France, and addressed a brief to the parliament. At the same time Duprat, whom the pontiff had created cardinal, and on whom he had conferred the archbishopric of Sens, and a rich abbey, laboured to respond to the favours of the court of Rome by the display of indefatigable animosity against the heretics. Thus the pope, the regent, the doctors of the Sorbonne, the parliament, and the chancellor, with the most ignorant and fanatical part of the nation, were conspiring together to ruin the Gospel and put its confessors to death.

The parliament took the lead. Nothing less than the first body in the kingdom was required to begin the campaign against this doctrine, and moreover, was it not their peculiar business, since the public safety was at stake? Accordingly the parliament, "influenced by a holy zeal and fervour against these novelties, issued a decree to the effect that the Bishop of Paris and the other prelates should be bound to commission Messieurs Philip Pot, president of requests, and Andrew Verjus, councillor, and Messieurs William Duchesne and Nicholas Leclerc, doctors of divinity, to institute and conduct the trial of those who should be tainted with the Lutheran doctrine. "And that it might appear that these commissioners were acting rather under the authority of the Church than of the parliament, it has pleased his holiness to send his brief of the 20th of May 1525, approving of the appointment of the said commissioners.

"In consequence of which, all those who were declared Lutherans by the bishop or ecclesiastical judges to these deputies, were delivered over to the secular arm, that is to say, to the aforesaid parliament, which thereupon condemned them to be burnt alive."

This is the language of a manuscript of the time.

Such was the terrible commission of inquiry appointed during the captivity of Francis I against the evangelical Christians of France on the ground of public safety. It was composed of two laymen and two ecclesiastics, and one of the latter was Duchesne, after Beda, the most fanatical doctor of the Sorbonne. They had sufficient modesty not to place him at their head, but his influence was only the more secure on that account.

Thus the machine was wound up; its springs were well prepared; death would be the result of each of its blows. It now became a question on whom they should make their first attack. Beda, Duchesne, and Leclerc, assisted by Philip Pot the president,

and Andrew Verjus the councillor, met to deliberate on this important point. Was there not the Count of Montbrun, the old friend of Louis XII, and formerly ambassador at Rome,—Briconnet, bishop of Meaux? The committee of public safety, assembled in Paris in 1525, thought that by commencing with a man in so exalted a station, they would be sure to spread dismay throughout the kingdom. This was a sufficient reason, and the venerable bishop was impeached.

It is true that Briconnet had given guarantees of submission to Rome, to the parliament, and to the popular superstitions; but it was strongly suspected that he had done so merely to ward off the blow about to fall upon him, and that he was still countenancing heresy in secret. It would appear that, after giving way, he had partly regained his courage;—a circumstance quite in harmony with these irresolute characters, who are tossed about and driven to and fro, as the waves of the sea by the wind. Several acts were ascribed to him in different places that would have been the most signal retractation of his unhappy decrees of 1523 and 1524. The more eminent his rank in the Church and in the State, the more fatal was his example, and the more necessary also was it to obtain from him a striking recantation of his errors, or to inflict upon him a still more notorious punishment.

The commission of inquiry eagerly collected the evidence against him. They took account of the kindly reception the bishop had given to the heretics; they stated that, a week after the superior of the Cordeliers had preached in St. Martin's Church at Meaux, conformably to the instructions of the Sorbonne, to restore sound doctrine, Briconnet himself had gone into the pulpit, and publicly refuted the orator, calling him and the other Grayfriars bigots, hypocrites, and false prophets; and that, not content with this public affront, he had, through his official, summoned the superior to appear before him in person. It would even appear from a manuscript of the times that the bishop had gone much farther, and that in the autumn of 1524, accompanied by Lefevre of Etaples, he had spent three months in travelling through his diocese, and had burnt all the images, save the crucifix alone. Such daring conduct, which would prove Briconnet to have possessed great boldness combined with [482] much timidity, cannot if it be true, fix upon him the blame attached to other image-breakers; for he was at the head of that Church whose superstitions he was reforming, and was acting in the sphere of his rights and duties.

Be that as it may, Briconnet could not fail of being guilty in the eyes of the enemies of the Gospel. He had not only attacked the Church in general; he had grappled with the Sorbonne itself, that body whose supreme law was its own glory and preservation.

Accordingly it was delighted on hearing of the examination instituted against its adversary; and John Bochart, one of the most celebrated advocates of the times, supporting the charge against Briconnet before the parliament, cried out, elevating his voice: "Against the Faculty, neither the Bishop of Meaux nor any private individual may raise his head or open his mouth. Nor is the Faculty called upon to enter into discussion, to produce and set forth its reasons before the said bishop, who ought not to resist the wisdom of that holy society, which he should regard as aided of God."

In consequence of this requisition, the parliament issued a decree on the 3rd October 1525, by which, after authorizing the arrest of all those who had been informed against, it ordered that the bishop should be interrogated by James Menager and Andrew Verjus, councillors of the court, touching the facts of which he was accused. This decree of the parliament amazed the bishop. Briconnet, the ambassador of two kings—Briconnet, a bishop and a prince, the friend of Louis XII and Francis I—to submit to an examination by two councillors of the court! He who had hoped that God would kindle in the heart of the king, of his mother, and of his sister, a fire that would spread over the whole nation, now saw the nation turning against him to extinguish the flame which he had received from heaven. The king is a prisoner, his mother is at the head of the enemies of the Gospel, and Margaret, alarmed at the misfortunes that burst upon France, dares not ward off the blows that are about to fall on her dearest friends, and directed first against that spiritual father who has so often consoled her; or, if she dares, she cannot. Quite recently she had written to Briconnet a letter full of pious outpourings: "Oh! that my poor, lifeless heart could feel some spark of love, with which I desire it were burnt to ashes." But now it was a question of literal burning. This mystic language was no longer in season; and whoever now desired to confess his faith, must brave the scaffold. The poor bishop, who had so earnestly hoped to see an evangelical reform gradually and gently making its way into every heart, was frightened, and trembled as he saw that he must now purchase it at the cost of his life. Never perhaps had this terrible thought occurred to him, and he recoiled from it in agony and affright.

Yet Briconnet had still one hope: if he were permitted to appear before the assembled chambers of parliament, as became a person of his rank, in that august and numerous court, he would be sure to find generous hearts responding to his appeal, and undertaking his defense. He therefore entreated the court to grant him this favour; but his enemies had equally reckoned on the issue of such a hearing. Had they not seen Luther appearing before the German diet and shaking the most determined hearts? On the watch to remove every chance of safety, they exerted

themselves to such effect that the parliament refused Briconnet this favour by a decree dated the 25th of October 1525, in confirmation of the one previously issued.

Here then was the Bishop of Meaux referred like the humblest priest to the jurisdiction of James Menager and Andrew Verjus. These two lawyers, docile instruments in the hands of the Sorbonne, would not be moved by those higher considerations to which the whole chamber might have been sensible; they were matter of fact men: had the bishop differed from that society, or had he not? This is all they desire to know. Briconnet's conviction was therefore secured.

While the parliament was thus holding the sword over the head of the bishop, the monks, priests, and doctors were not idle; they saw that Briconnet's retractation would be of more service to them than his punishment. His death would only inflame the zeal of all those who held the same faith with him; but his apostasy would plunge them into the deepest discouragement. They went to work accordingly. They visited and entreated him, Martial Mazurier in particular endeavouring to make him fall, as he had done himself. There was no lack of arguments which might appear specious to Briconnet. Would he like to be deprived of his functions? Could he not, by remaining in the church, employ his influence with the king and the court to effect an incalculable amount of good? What would become of his old friends, when he was no longer in power? Might not his resistance compromise a reform, which, to be salutary and durable, should be carried out by the legitimate influence of the clergy? How [483] many souls he would offend by resisting the Church; how many souls he would attract, on the contrary, by giving way!

They, like himself, were anxious for a reform. All is advancing insensibly; at the court and in the city and provinces, everything is moving forward and would he in mere recklessness of heart destroy so fair a prospect! After all, they did not call upon him to sacrifice his opinions, but only to submit to the established order of the Church. Was it well in him, when France was labouring under so many reverses, to stir up new confusions? "In the name of religion, of your country, of your friends, and of the Reformation itself, be persuaded," said they. By such sophisms are the noblest causes ruined.

Yet every one of these considerations had its influence on the mind of the bishop. The tempter, who desired to make our Saviour fall in the wilderness, thus presented himself to Briconnet in specious colours, but instead of saying with his Master: "Get thee behind me, Satan!" he listened, welcomed, and pondered on these suggestions. From that hour his fidelity was at an end.

Briconnet had never embarked with his whole heart, like Luther or Farel, in the movement that was then regenerating the Church; there was in him a certain mystical tendency which weakens men's minds, and deprives them of that firmness and courage which proceed from faith alone based on the Word of God. The cross that he was called to take up that he might follow Christ was too heavy. Shaken, alarmed, stupefied, and distracted, he stumbled against the stone which had been artfully placed in his path he fell, and instead of throwing himself into the arms of Jesus, he threw himself into those of Mazurier, and by a shameful recantation sullied the glory of a noble faithfulness.

Thus fell Briconnet, the friend of Lefevre and of Margaret; thus the earliest supporter of the Gospel in France denied the glad tidings of grace, in the guilty thought that if he remained faithful, he would lose his influence over the Church, the court, and France. But what was represented to him as the salvation of his country, perhaps became its ruin. What would have been the result if Briconnet had possessed the courage of Luther? If one of the first bishops of France, beloved by the king and by the people, had ascended the scaffold, and had, like the little ones of the world, sealed the truth of the Gospel by a bold confession and a christian death, would not France herself have been moved; and the blood of the bishop becoming, like that of Polycarp and Cyprian, the seed of the Church, might we not have seen that country, so illustrious in many respects, emerging in the sixteenth century from that spiritual darkness with which it is still clouded?

Briconnet underwent a mere formal examination before James Menager and Andrew Verjus, who declared that he had sufficiently vindicated himself of the crime imputed to him. He was then subjected to penance, and assembled a synod in which he condemned Luther's books, retracted all that he had taught contrary to the doctrine of the Church, restored the invocation of saints, endeavoured to bring back those who had forsaken the Romish worship, and wishing to leave no doubt of his reconciliation with the pope and the Sorbonne, kept a solemn fast on the eve of Corpus Christi, and gave orders for pompous processions, in which he appeared personally, still further testifying his faith by his magnificence and by every kind of devout observance. In his will he commended his soul to the Virgin Mary and to the heavenly choir of paradise, and desired that after his death (which happened in 1533) twelve hundred masses should be said for the repose of his soul.

The fall of Briconnet is perhaps the most memorable in the history of the Reformation. Nowhere else do we find a man so sincerely pious and so deeply engaged in the reform turning round so suddenly against it: yet we must clearly understand his character and his fall. Briconnet was, as regards Rome, what Lefevre was with

respect to the Reformation. They were both persons of half-measures, properly belonging to neither party. The doctor of Etaples inclined towards the Word, while the Bishop of Meaux leaned to the hierarchy; and when these two men who touch each other were called upon to decide, the one ranged himself under the banner of Rome, and the other of Jesus Christ. We cannot, however, be sure that Briconnet was wholly untrue to the convictions of his faith; at no period after his recantation did the Romish doctors place entire confidence in him. But he acted, perhaps, as the Archbishop of Cambray afterwards did, and whom he resembled in many points; he thought he might submit outwardly to the pope, while remaining inwardly subject to his old convictions. Such weakness in incompatible with the principles of the Reformation. Briconnet was one of the chiefs of the mystic or quietest school in France, and we know that one of its leading maxims has ever been to accommodate itself to the church in which it exists, whatever that church may be.

Briconnet's guilty fall went to the hearts of his old friends, and [484]was the sad forerunner of those lamentable apostasies which the spirit of the world so often obtained in France in another age. The man who seemed to hold the reins of the Reformation in his hand was suddenly thrown from his seat; and the Reformation was thenceforward destined to pursue its course in France, without a human leader, without a chief, in humility and in obscurity. But the disciples of the Gospel raised their heads, and from that time looked with a firmer faith towards that heavenly Guide, whose faithfulness they knew could not be shaken.

The Sorbonne triumphed; this was a great stride towards the destruction of the Reform in France; and it was important to achieve another victory without delay. Lefevre stood next after Briconnet. Accordingly Beda had immediately turned the attack against him, by publishing a book against this illustrious doctor, full of such gross calumnies, that Erasmus says, "even smiths and cobblers could have pointed them out." His fury was particularly excited by the doctrine of justification through faith, which Lefevre was the first to preach to Christendom in the sixteenth century. To this point Beda continually recurred, as an article which, according to him, overturned the Church. "What!" said he, "Lefevre affirms that whoever places his salvation in himself will surely perish; while the man that lays aside all strength of his own, and throws himself entirely into the arms of Jesus Christ, will be saved! Oh, what heresy! to teach the inefficacy of meritorious works! What a hellish error! what a deceitful snare of the devil! Let us oppose it with all our might!"

That engine of persecution which produces either retractation or death, was immediately turned against the doctor of Etaples; and hopes were already entertained of seeing Lefevre share the fate of the poor wool-comber or of the

illustrious Briconnet. His accusation was soon drawn up; and a decree of the parliament (dated 28th of August 1525) condemned nine propositions extracted from his commentaries on the Gospels, and placed his translation of the Scriptures in the list of prohibited books.

This was only the prelude; and that the learned doctor knew. Upon the first symptoms of persecution, he had felt that, in the absence of France I, he must fall under the assault of his enemies, and that the moment was now come to obey the Lord's commandment:

When they persecute you in one city, flee ye into another. Lefevre quitted Meaux, where, after the bishop's apostasy, he had drunk nothing but the cup of bitterness, and saw all his activity paralyzed; and as he withdrew from his persecutors, he shook the dust from off his feet against them, "not to call down evil upon them, but as a sign of the evils that were in store for them; for (says he in one place) just as this dust is shaken from off our feet, are they cast off from the face of the Lord."

The persecutors had missed their victim; but they consoled themselves with the thought that France was at least delivered from the father of the heretics.

The fugitive Lefevre arrived at Strasburg under a borrowed name; there he immediately united with the friends of the Reformation; and what must have been his joy at hearing that Gospel publicly taught which he had been the first to bring forward in the Church! Lo, there was his faith! this was exactly what he had intended to teach! He seemed to have been born a second time to the christian life. Gerard Roussel, one of those evangelical men who, like the doctor of Etaples, did not attain complete emancipation, had also been compelled to quit France. Together they followed the teaching of Capito and Bucer; they had frequent private conversations with these faithful doctors, and a report was circulated that they had even been commissioned to do so by Margaret, the king's sister. But Lefevre was more occupied in contemplating the ways of God than with polemies. Casting his eyes over Christendom, filled with astonishment on beholding the great events that were taking place, moved with thankfulness, and his heart full of anticipation, he fell on his knees and prayed the Lord "to perfect that which he saw then beginning."

One pleasure in particular awaited him in Strasburg; Farel his disciple, his son, from whom he had been separated by persecution for nearly three years, had arrived there before him. The aged doctor of the Sorbonne found in his young pupil a man in the vigor of life, a Christian in all the energy of faith. Farel affectionately clasped that wrinkled hand which had guided his first steps, and he experienced an indescribable

joy at again meeting with his father in an evangelical city, and on seeing him surrounded with faithful men. Together they listened to the pure instructions of illustrious teachers; together they partook of the Lord's Supper in conformity with Christ's institution; together they received touching proofs of the love of their brethren. "Do you remember," said Farel, "what you once observed to me when we were both sunk in darkness: William, God will renew the world, and you will see it! Here is the beginning of what you then told me."—"Yes:" answered the pious old man, "God is renewing [485] the world My dear son, continue to preach boldly the holy Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Lefevre, from excess of caution doubtless, wished to live unknown at Strasburg, and had taken the name of Anthony Pilgrim, while Roussel assumed that of Solnin. But the illustrious doctor could not remain hidden; in a short time the whole city and the very children saluted the aged Frenchman with respect. He did not dwell alone; but resided in Capito's house with Farel, Roussel, Vedastus, who was eulogized for his diffidence, and a certain Simon, a converted Jew. The houses of Capito, Oecolampadius, Zwingle, and Luther, were then like inns. Such was at that time the strength of brotherly love. Many other Frenchmen were living in this city on the banks of the Rhine, and they founded a church in which Farel often preached the doctrine of salvation. This christian society soothed the pain of exile.

While these brethren were thus enjoying the asylum offered them by fraternal affection, those in Paris and in other parts of France were exposed to great dangers. Briconnet had retracted; Lefevre had quitted France; this was no doubt something for the Sorbonne; but it had still to wait for the punishments that it had advised. Beda and his party had found no victims one man exasperated them still more than Briconnet and Lefevre; this was Louis Berquin. The gentleman of Artois, of a more decided character than his two masters, omitted no opportunity of tormenting the monks and theologians, and of unmasking their fanaticism. Living by turns at Paris and in the provinces, he collected and translated the writings of Luther and Erasmus: he himself would compose controversial works, and defend and propagate the new doctrine with all the zeal of a new convert. The Bishop of Amiens denounced him; Beda seconded the charge; and the parliament had him thrown into prison. "This one," said they, "shall not escape us like Briconnet or Lefevre." In effect, they kept him in close confinement. In vain did the superior of the Carthusians and others entreat him to apologize; he boldly declared that the would not give way on a single point. "There seemed no way left," says a chronicler, "but to lead him to the stake."

Margaret, in consternation at what had happened to Briconnet, dreaded to see Berquin dragged to that scaffold which the bishop had so shamefully escaped. Not

daring to visit him in prison, she endeavoured to convey a few words of consolation to him; and it was perhaps for him that the princess composed this touching complaint of the prisoner, in which the latter, addressing the Lord, exclaims:— But yet, where'er my prison be, Its gates can never keep out Thee; For instant where I am, Thou art with me.

But Margaret did not stop here; she instantly wrote to her brother, soliciting this gentleman's pardon. Happy would she be if she could deliver him in time from the hatred of his enemies.

While waiting for this victim, Beda resolved to intimidate the enemies of the Sorbonne and of the monks by crushing the most celebrated of them. Erasmus had taken up the pen against Luther; but that was of little consequence. If they can succeed in destroying Erasmus, with much the stronger reason would the ruin of Farel, of Luther, and of their associates be inevitable. The surest way to reach the mark is to aim beyond it. When once Rome has placed her foot upon the neck of the philosopher of Rotterdam, where is the heretical doctor that can escape its vengeance? Lecouturier, commonly known by his Latin name Sutor (cobbler), had already begun the attack, by launching from his solitary Carthusian cell a treatise overflowing with violence, in which he called his opponents theologasters and jackasses, charging them with scandalous crimes, heresy, and blasphemy. Treating of subjects which he did not understand, he reminded his readers of the old proverb: Ne sutor ultra crepidam, Let the cobbler stick to his last.

Beda hastened to the assistance of his brother. He ordered Erasmus to write no more; and taking up that pen which he had commanded the greatest writer of the age to lay down, he made a collection of all the calumnies that the monks had invented against the illustrious philosopher, translated them into French, and composed a book that he circulated in the city and at court, striving to raise all France against him. This work was the signal of attack; Erasmus was assailed from every quarter. An old Carmelite of Louvain, Nicholas Ecmond, exclaimed every time he went into the pulpit, "There is no difference between Luther and Erasmus, except that Erasmus is the greater heretic;" and wherever the Carmelite might be, at table, in coach, or in boat, he called Erasmus a heresiarch and forger. The faculty of Paris, excited by these clamours, prepared a censure against the illustrious writer.

Erasmus was astounded. This, then, is the end of all his forbearance, and of even his hostility against Luther. He had mounted to the breach with greater courage than any man; and now they want [486] to make him a stepping stone, and trample him under foot, that they may the more securely attack the common enemy. This idea

disgusted him: he turned round immediately, and almost before he had ceased his attack upon Luther, fell upon these fanatical doctors, who had assailed him from behind. Never was his correspondence more active than now. He glances all around him, and his piercing eye soon discovers in whose hands depends his fate. He does not hesitate: he will lay his complaints and remonstrances at the feet of the Sorbonne, of the parliament, of the king, and of the emperor himself. "What is it that has kindled this immense Lutheran conflagration?" wrote he to those theologians of the Sorbonne, from whom he still expected some little impartiality; "what has fanned it, if not the virulence of Beda and his fellows? In war, a soldier who has done his duty receives a reward from his general; and all the recompense I shall receive from you, the leaders of this war, is to be delivered up to the calumnies of such as Beda and Lecouturier."

"What!" wrote he to the parliament, "when I was contending with these Lutherans, and while I was maintaining a severe struggle by order of the emperor, the pope, and other princes, even at the peril of my life, Beda and Lecouturier attacked me from behind with their foul libels! Ah, if fortune had not deprived us of King Francis, I should have invoked this avenger of the muses against this new invasion of the barbarians. But now it is your duty to put an end to such injustice!"

As soon as he found the possibility of conveying a letter to the king, he wrote to him immediately. His penetrating eye detected in these fanatical doctors of the Sorbonne the germs of the league, the predecessors of those three priests who were one day to set up the Sixteen against the last of the Valois; his genius forewarned the king of the crimes and misfortunes which his descendants were destined to know but too well. "Religion is their pretext," said he, "but they aspire to tyranny even over princes. They move with a sure step, though their path is underground. Should the prince be disinclined to submit to them in everything, they will declare that he may be deposed by the Church; that is to say, by a few false monks and theologians who conspire against the public peace." Erasmus in writing to Francis I could not have touched a tenderer point.

Finally, to be more certain of escape from his enemies, Erasmus invoked the protection of Charles V. "Invincible emperor," said he, "certain individuals who, under the pretence of religion, wish to establish their own gluttony and despotism, are raising a horrible outcry against me. I am fighting under your banners and those of Jesus Christ. May your wisdom and power restore peace to the christian world."

Thus did the prince of letters address the great ones of the age. The danger was averted; the powers of the world interposed; the vultures were compelled to abandon

a prey which they fancied already in their talons. Upon this they turned their eyes to another quarter, seeking fresh victims, which were soon found.

Lorraine was the first place in which blood was again to flow. From the earliest days of the Reform there had been a fanatical alliance between Paris and the country of the Guises. When Paris was quiet, Lorraine applied to the task; and then Paris resumed her labour, while Metz and Nancy were recovering their strength. In June 1525, Peter Toussaint returned to Metz, in company with Farel. They desired a hearing before their lordships the Thirteen; and this being refused, they appealed to the eschevin. Plans were already laid for throwing them into prison, when, fearful of danger, they quickly left the city, travelling all night lest they should be overtaken.

The first blows were destined apparently to fall on an excellent man, one of the Basle refugees, a friend of Farel and Toussaint. The Chevalier d'Esch had not been able to escape the suspicions of the priests in Metz. They discovered that he kept up a communication with the evangelical Christians, and he was imprisoned at Pont-a-Mousson, about five miles from Metz on the banks of the Moselle. These tidings overwhelmed the French refugees and the Swiss themselves with sorrow. "O heart full of innocence!" exclaimed Oecolampadius. "I have confidence in the Lord," added he, "that he will preserve this man to us, either in life as a preacher of righteousness, to announce His name, or as a martyr to confess him in death." But at the same time Oecolampadius disapproved of the impetuosity, enthusiasm, and imprudent zeal which distinguished the French refugees. "I wish," said he, "that my very dear lords of France would not be so hasty in returning into their own country, before they had duly examined all things; for the devil is spreading his snares on every side. Nevertheless let them obey the Spirit of Christ, and may this Spirit never abandon them."

There was, in truth, reason to fear for the chevalier. The fury of [487] the enemy had broken out in Lorraine with redoubled violence. The provincial of the Cordeliers, Bonaventure Renel, confessor to Duke Anthony the Good, a man devoid of shame, and not very commendable on the score of morals, gave this weak prince, who reigned from 1508 to 1544, great licence in his pleasures, and persuaded him, almost by way of penance, to destroy the innovators without mercy. "It is enough for every one to know his Pater and his Ave," this prince, so well tutored by Renel, would say; "the greater the doctor, the greater the disturbance."

Towards the end of 1524 the duke's court was informed that a pastor named Schuch was preaching some new doctrine in the town of St. Hippolyte, at the foot of

the Vosges. "Let them return to their duty," said Anthony the Good, "or else I will march against the city, and destroy it by fire and sword."

Upon this the faithful pastor resolved to give himself up for his flock, and repaired to Nancy, where the prince was residing. As soon as he arrived he was thrown into a filthy prison, under the guard of brutal and cruel men; and Friar Bonaventure at last saw the heretic in his power. It was he who presided at the trial. "Heretic! Judas! devil!" exclaimed he. Schuch, calm and collected, made no reply to this abuse; but holding in his hands a Bible, all covered with notes, he meekly yet forcibly confessed Christ crucified. On a sudden he became animated; he stood up boldly, and raising his voice, as if filled by the Spirit from on high, looked his judges in the face, and threatened them with the terrible judgments of God.

Brother Bonaventure and his companions, amazed and transported with rage, rushed upon his with violent cries, tore away the Bible from which he was reading this menacing language, "and like mad dogs," says the chronicler, "unable to bite his doctrine, they burnt it in their convent."

All the court of Lorraine resounded with the obstinacy and impudence of the minister of St. Hippolyte, and the prince, curious to hear the heretic, desired to be present at his last interrogatory, but in secret however, and concealed from every eye. As the examination took place in Latin, he could not understand a word; but he was struck with the firm countenance of the minister, who seemed neither vanquished nor confounded. Exasperated at such obstinacy, Anthony the Good rose up, and said as he withdrew: "Why do you still dispute? He denies the sacrament of the mass; let them proceed to execution against him." Schuch was instantly condemned to be burnt alive. When the sentence was made known to him, he raised his eyes to heaven, saying mildly: "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord."

On the 19th August 1525 the whole city of Nancy was in motion. The bells were tolling for the death of a heretic. The mournful procession set out. It was necessary to pass before the convent of the Cordeliers, who, rejoicing and expectant, had assembled before the gate. At the moment that Schuch appeared, Father Bonaventure, pointing to the carved images over the portals of the convent, exclaimed: "Heretic! pay honour to God, to his mother, and to the saints."—"Ye hypocrites!" replied Schuch, standing erect before these blocks of wood and stone, "God will destroy you, and bring your deceits to light!"

When the martyr reached the place of execution, his books were burnt before his face; he was then called upon to retract; but he refused, saying: "It is thou, O God, who hast called me, and thou wilt give me strength unto the end." After this he began to repeat aloud the fifty-first psalm: "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, according to thy loving kindness." Having mounted the pile, he continued to recite the psalm until the smoke and the flames stifled his voice.

Thus the persecutors of France and Lorraine beheld a renewal of their victories; at length men paid attention to their advice. The ashes of a heretic had been scattered to the winds at Nancy; it was a challenge to the capital of France. What! shall Beda and Lecouturier be the last to show their zeal for the pope! Let flames reply to flames, and heresy, swept from the soil of the kingdom, would soon be entirely driven back beyond the Rhine.

But before he could succeed, Beda had to sustain a combat, half serious, half ludicrous, against one of those men with whom the struggle against the Papacy is merely an intellectual pastime and not an earnest purpose of the heart. Among the scholars whom Briconnet had attracted to his diocese, was a doctor of the Sorbonne, named Peter Caroli, a vain and frivolous man, not less quarrelsome and litigious than Beda himself. In the new doctrine Caroli saw the means of vexing Beda, whose ascendancy he could not endure. Accordingly, on his return from Meaux to Paris, he made a great sensation by carrying into the pulpit what was called, "the new way of preaching." Then began an indefatigable struggle between the two doctors; it was blow for blow, and trick for trick. Beda summoned Caroli before the Sorbonne, and Caroli summoned him before the bishop's court by way of reparation. The faculty continued the examination, and Caroli gave notice of an appeal to the parliament. He was provisionally forbidden to enter the [488] pulpit, and he preached in all the churches of Paris. Being positively forbidden to preach at all, he publicly lectured on the Psalms in the College of Cambray.

The faculty forbade him to continue his course, and he begged permission to finish the explanation of the 22nd Psalm, which he had just begun. Finally, on the refusal of his request, he posted the following placard on the college gates: "Peter Caroli, desirous of obeying the orders of the sacred faculty, has ceased to lecture; he will resume his lectures (whenever it shall please God) at the verse where he left off: They have pierced My Hands and My Feet." Thus Beda at last found his match. If Caroli had seriously defended the truth, the burning pile would soon have been his reward; but he was of too profane a spirit to be put to death. How could the judges capitally punish a man who made them lose their gravity. Neither the bishop's court, nor the parliament, nor the council, could ever come to a definite decision in his cause.

Two men such as Caroli would have wearied out the activity of Beda himself; but the Reformation did not produce his parallel.

As soon as this unseasonable contest was ended, Beda applied to more serious matters. Happily for the syndic of the Sorbonne, there were men who gave persecution a better hold of them than Caroli. Briconnet, Erasmus, Lefevre, and Farel had escaped him; but since he cannot reach these distinguished individuals, he will content himself with meaner persons. The poor youth, James Pavanne, after his abjuration at Christmas 1524, had done nothing but weep and sigh. He might be seen with a melancholy air, his eyes fixed on the earth, groaning inwardly, and severely reproaching himself for having denied his Saviour and his God.

Pavanne was undoubtedly the most diffident and inoffensive of men: but what mattered that! he had been at Meaux, and in those days that was sufficient. "Pavanne has relapsed," was the cry; "the dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." He was immediately arrested, thrown into prison, and taken before his judges. This was all that the youthful James required. He felt comforted as soon as he was in chains, and found strength sufficient to confess Jesus Christ with boldness. The cruel persecutors smiled as they saw that, this time at least, nothing could save their victim; there was no recantation, no flight, no powerful patronage. The young man's mildness, his candour and courage, failed to soften his adversaries. He regarded them with love; for by casting him into prison, they had restored him to tranquillity and joy; but his tender looks only served to harden their hearts. His trial was soon concluded: a pile was erected on the Greve, where Pavanne died rejoicing, strengthening by his example all those who in that large city believed openly or secretly in the Gospel of Christ.

This was not enough for the Sorbonne. If they are compelled to sacrifice the little ones of the world, their number must at least make amends for their quality. The flames of the Greve struck terror into Paris and the whole of France; but a new pile, kindled on another spot, will redouble that terror. It will be talked of at court, in the colleges, and in the workshops of the people; and such proofs will show more clearly than any edicts, that Louisa of Savoy, the Sorbonne, and the parliament, are resolved to sacrifice the very last heretic to the anathemas of Rome.

In the forest of Livry, three leagues from Paris, and not far from the spot where once stood the ancient abbey of the Augustines, dwelt a hermit, who in his excursions having met with some men of Meaux, had received the evangelical doctrine in his heart. The poor hermit had felt himself rich in his retreat, when one day, returning with the scanty food that public charity bestowed on him, he carried back Jesus

Christ and his grace. From that time he found that it was better to give than to receive. He went from house to house in the surrounding villages, and as soon as he had opened the doors of the poor peasants whom he visited in their humble huts, he spoke to them of the Gospel, of the perfect pardon that it offers to the burdened soul, and which is far better than absolutions. Erelong the good hermit of Livry was known in the environs of Paris; people went to visit him in his lowly cell, and he became a mild and fervent missionary for the simple souls of that district.

The rumour of the doings of this new evangelist did not fail to reach the ears of the Sorbonne and of the magistrates of Paris. The hermit was seized, dragged from his hermitage, from his forest, from those fields through which he used to wander daily, thrown into a prison in that great city which he had ever shunned, and condemned "to suffer the exemplary punishment of the slow fire."

In order to render the example more striking, it was determined that he should be burnt alive in the front of Notre-Dame, before that splendid cathedral, that majestic symbol of Roman Catholicism. All the clergy were convoked, and as much pomp was displayed as on the most solemn festivals. They would, if possible, have attracted all Paris round the stake, "the great bell of the church of NotreDame (says an historian) tolling solemnly to arouse the citizens." The people flocked in crowds through all the streets that led into the square. The deep tones of the bell drew the workman from his toil, the scholar from his books, the merchant from his traffic, the soldier from his idleness, and already the wide space was covered by an immense crowd which still kept increasing.

The hermit, clad in the garments assigned to obstinate heretics, with head and feet bare, had been led before the gates of the cathedral. Calm, firm, and collected, he made no reply to the exhortations of the confessors who presented him a crucifix, save by declaring that his sole hope was in the pardon of God. The doctors of the Sorbonne, in the front ranks of the spectators, seeing his constancy, and the effect it was producing on the people, cried aloud: "He is damned: they are leading him to hell-fire!" The great bell still continued tolling, and its loud notes, by stunning the ears of the crowd, increased the solemnity of this mournful spectacle. At length the bell was silent, and the martyr having replied to the last questions of his enemies, that he was resolved to die in the faith of his Lord Jesus Christ, was burnt by a slow fire, according to the tenor of his sentence. And thus, in front of Notre-Dame, amid the shouts and emotion of a whole people, under the shadow of the towers raised by the piety of Louis the younger, peacefully died a man, whose name history has not transmitted to us, except as the "Hermit of Livry."

CHAPTER 15

A Student of Noyon—Character of young Calvin—Early Education—Consecrated to Theology—The Bishop gives him the Tonsure—He leaves Noyon on Account of the Plague—The two Calvins—Slanders—The Reformation creates new Languages—Persecution and Terror—Toussaint put in Prison—The Persecution more furious—Death of Du Blet, Moulin, and Papillon—God saves the Church—Margaret's Project—Her Departure for Spain

While men were thus putting to death the first confessors of Jesus Christ in France, God was preparing mightier ones to fill their places. Beda hurried to the stake an unassuming scholar, an humble hermit, and thought he was dragging almost the whole of the Reform along with them. But Providence has resources that are unknown to the world. The Gospel, like the fabulous phoenix, contains a principle of life within itself, which the flames cannot consume, and it springs up again from its own ashes. It is often at the moment when the storm is at its height, when the thunderbolt seems to have struck down the truth, and when thick darkness hides it from our view, that a sudden glimmering appears, the forerunner of a great deliverance. At this time, when all human powers in France were arming against the Gospel for the complete destruction of the Reformation, God was preparing an instrument, weak to all appearance, one day to support His rights and to defend His cause with more than mortal intrepidity. In the midst of the persecutions and blazing piles that followed each other in close succession after Francis became Charles's prisoner, let up fix our eyes on a youth, one day to be called to the head of a great army in the holy warfare of Israel.

Among the inhabitants of the city and colleges of Paris who heard the sound of the great bell was a young scholar of sixteen, a native of Noyon in Picardy, of middle stature, sallow features, and whose piercing eye and animated looks announced a mind of no common sagacity. His dress, extremely neat but of perfect simplicity, betokened order and moderation. This young man, by name John Calvin or Calvin, was then studying at the college of La Marche, under Mathurin Cordier, a rector celebrated for his probity, erudition, and peculiar fitness for the instruction of youth. Brought up in all the superstitions of popery, the scholar of Noyon was blindly submissive to the Church, cheerfully complying with all her observances, and persuaded that the heretics had richly deserved their fate. The blood which was then flowing in Paris aggravated the crime of heresy in his eyes. But although naturally

of a timid and fearful disposition, and which he himself has styled soft and pusillanimous, he possessed that uprightness and generosity of heart which lead a man to sacrifice everything to his convictions. Accordingly, in vain had his youth been appalled by those frightful spectacles, in vain had murderous flames consumed the faithful disciples of the Gospel on the Greve and in front of Notre-Dame; the recollection of these horrors could not prevent him from one day entering on the new path, which seemed to lead only to the prison or the stake.

Moreover, there were already perceptible in the character of young Calvin certain traits that announced what he would become. Strictness of morals in him led the way to strictness of doctrine, and the scholar of sixteen already gave promise of a man who would deal seriously [490] with every principle he embraced, and who would firmly require in others what he himself found it so easy to perform. Quite and serious during his lessons, never sharing in the amusements or follies of his schoolfellows during the hours of recreation, holding himself aloof, and filled with horror at sin, he would often reprimand their disorders with severity and even bitterness. And hence, as a canon of Noyon informs us, his fellow-students nicknamed him the accusative case. Among them he was the representative of conscience and of duty, so far was he from being as some of his calumniators have depicted him. The pale features and the piercing eyes of the scholar of sixteen had already inspired his comrades with more respect than the black gowns of their masters; and this Picard youth, of a timid air, who daily took his seat on the benches in the college of La Marche, was even then, by the seriousness of his conversation and life, an unconscious minister and reformer.

It was not in these particulars alone that the youth of Noyon was already far above his schoolfellows. His great timidity sometimes prevented him from manifesting all the horror he felt at vanity and vice; but he already consecrated to study the whole force of his genius and of his will, and to look at him one might see he was a man who would spend his life in toil. He comprehended everything with inconceivable facility; he ran in his studies while his companions were lazily creeping along, and he impressed deeply on his profound genius what others spend much time in learning superficially. Accordingly, his master was compelled to take him out of the classes, and introduce him singly to fresh studies.

Among his fellow-students were the young De Mommors, belonging to the first nobility of Picardy. John Calvin was very intimate with them, especially with Claude, who afterwards became abbot of Saint Eloi, and to whom he dedicated his commentary on Seneca. It was in the company of these young nobles that Calvin had come to Paris. His father, Gerard Calvin, apostolic notary, procurator-fiscal of the county of Noyon, secretary of the diocese, and proctor of the chapter, was a man of

judgment and ability, whose talents had raised him to offices sought after by the best families, and who had gained the esteem of all the gentry in the province, and in particular of the noble family of Mommor. Gerard resided at Noyon; he had married a young woman of Cambray, of remarkable beauty and unassuming piety, by name Jane Lefranq, who had already borne him a son named Charles, when on the 10th of July 1509 she gave birth to a second son, who received the name of John, and who was christened in the church of St. Godeberte. A third son, Anthony, who died young, and two daughters, made up the family of the procurator-fiscal of Noyon.

Gerard Calvin, living in familiar intercourse with the heads of the clergy and the chief persons in the province, desired that his children should receive the same education as those of the best families. John, whose precocious habits he had observed, was brought up with the sons of the Mommor family; he lived in their house as one of themselves, and studied the same lessons as Claude. In this family he learnt the first elements of literature and of life; he thus received a higher polish than he appeared destined to acquire. He was afterwards sent to the college of the Capettes, founded in the city of Noyon. The child enjoyed but little recreation. The austerity, that was one of the characteristic features of the son, was found also in the father. Gerard brought him up strictly; from his earliest years, John was compelled to bend to the inflexible rule of duty, which soon became habitual to him, and the influence of the father counteracted that of the Mommer family. Calvin, who was of a timid and somewhat rustic character (as he says himself), and rendered still more timid by his father's severity, shrunk from the splendid apartments of his protectors, and loved to remain alone and in obscurity. Thus in retirement his young mind formed itself to great thoughts. It would appear that he sometimes went to the village of Pont l'Eveque, near Noyon, where his grandfather resided in a small cottage, and where other relatives also, who at a later period changed their name from detestation of the heresiarch, kindly received the son of the procurator-fiscal.

But it was to study chiefly that young Calvin devoted his time. [491] While Luther, who was to act upon the people, was brought up like a child of the people, Calvin, who was to act especially as a theologian and profound reasoner, and become the legislator of the renovated Church, received even in childhood a more liberal education.

A spirit of piety early showed itself in the child's heart. One author relates that he was accustomed, when very young, to pray in the open air, under the vault of heaven; a habit which contributed to awaken in his heart the sentiment of God's omnipresence. But although Calvin might, even in infancy, have heard the voice of God in his heart, no one at Noyon was so rigid as he in the observance of ecclesiastical

regulations. And hence Gerard, remarking this disposition, conceived the design of devoting his son to theology. This prospect no doubt contributed to impress on his soul that serious form, that theological stamp, by which it was subsequently distinguished. His spirit was of a nature to receive a strong impression in early years, and to familiarize itself from childhood with the most elevated thoughts. The report that he was at this time a chorister has no foundation, as even his adversaries admit. But they assure us that, when a child, he was seen joining the religious processions, and carrying a sword with a cross-shaped hilt by way of a crucifix. "A presage," add they, "of what he was one day to become!" "The Lord hath made my mouth like a sharp sword," says the servant of Jehovah in Isaiah. The same may be said of Calvin.

Gerard was poor; his son's education had cost him much, and he wished to attach him irrevocably to the Church. The Cardinal of Lorraine had been coadjutor of the Bishop of Metz at the age of four years. It was then a common practice to confer ecclesiastical titles and revenues on children. Alphonso of Portugal was made cardinal by Leo X at the age of eight, and Odet of Chatillon by Clement VII at eleven; and subsequent to Calvin's day, the celebrated Mere Angelique of Port Royal was appointed coadjutrix of that nunnery at the age of seven years. Gerard, who died a good catholic, was regarded with favour by Messire Charles de Hangest, bishop of Noyon, and by his vicars-general. Accordingly, when the chaplain of La Gesine resigned, the bishop, on the 21st May 1521, conferred this benefice on John Calvin, who was then nearly twelve years old. The appointment was communicated to the Chapter twelve days after. On the eve of Corpus Christi, the bishop solemnly cut off the child's hair, and by this ceremony of the tonsure, John became a member of the clergy, and capable of entering into holy orders, and of holding a benefice without residing on the spot.

Thus was Calvin called to make trial in his own person of the abuses of the Romish Church. Of all who wore the tonsure in France, there was none more serious in his piety than the chaplain of La Gesine, and the serious child was probably astonished himself at the work of the bishop and his vicars-general. But in his simplicity he felt too much veneration towards these exalted personages to indulge in the least suspicion on the lawfulness of his tonsure. He had held the title about two years when Noyon was visited by a dreadful pestilence. Several of the canons petitioned the Chapter that they might be allowed to quit the city. Already many of the inhabitants had been carried off by the great death, and Gerard was beginning to fear that his son John, the hope of his life, might in a moment be snatched from his tenderness by the scourge of God. The young de Mommors were going to Paris to continue their studies; this was what the procurator-fiscal had always desired for his son. Why should he separate John from his fellow-students?

On the 5th of August 1523, he petitioned the Chapter to procure the young chaplain "liberty to go wherever he pleased during the plague, without loss of his allowance; which was granted him until the feast of Saint Remy." John Calvin quitted his father's house at the age of fourteen. It requires great audacity in calumny to ascribe his departure to other causes, and in mere wantonness challenge that disgrace which justly recoils on those who circulate charges the falsehood of which has been so authentically demonstrated. It appears that in Paris, Calvin lodged at the house of one of his uncles, Richard Cauvin, who resided near the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. "Thus flying from the pestilence," says the canon of Noyon, "he went to catch it elsewhere."

Some years after Calvin had quitted Noyon, another individual of the same name arrived in that city. John Calvin was a young man of corrupt principles, but as he came from another part of France, and was a stranger (or unknown) in Noyon, he was received among the priests who chanted in the choir, and in a short time a chapel was given him, as in the case of the first Calvin. As this took place at a time when the latter had already "turned to heresy," the good canons looked upon Cauvin's arrival as a sort of recompense and [492] consolation; but it was not long before the disorderly life of this wretched man excited alarm among his protectors. He was reprimanded, punished, and even deprived of his stipend: but to this he paid no attention, continually lapsing again into incontinence. "Seeing then," says the canon, "his hardness of heart, which made him neglect every kind of remonstrance," the canons deprived John Calvin of his chapel and expelled him from the choir. James Desmay, a priest and doctor of divinity, who had studied at Noyon everything that concerned this church, adds, that he was privately scourged in 1552, and then driven from the town. This is indeed a disgraceful end for a priest! The canon Levasseur disputes the scourging, but admits all the rest.

In the following year the same circumstances happened again, for the history of popery abounds in such adventures. A certain Baldwin the younger, also chaplain at Noyon, having taken to live scandalously with him certain women of suspicious character, was condemned to attend every service in the church during a month, and to be scourged.

While these two Romanist authors agree in relating the disorders and punishments inflicted on these young ecclesiastics, they likewise agree in declaring that they had found nothing at Noyon or in its registers against the morals of the great French reformer, and are content to execrate his error; "for to call a man a heretic, is to call him by the most opprobrious of names."

The Dean of Noyon goes even farther in his zeal for the papacy, and relates that John Calvin, who had been expelled in 1552 for incontinence, died a good catholic. "Thanks be to God," adds he, "that he never turned his coat, nor changed his religion, to which his libertine life and the example of his namesake Calvin seemed to incline him." The dean concludes his strange narrative, the discovery of which is highly valuable to the history of the Reformation, in these words: "I thought it my duty to add this Chapter to the history of the first Calvin the reformer, ad diluendam homonymiam (to guard against the similarity of names), for fear one should be taken for the other, the catholic for the heretic."

Never was fear better founded. We know what the popish writers are accustomed to do. They take advantage of the misdeeds of John Calvin at Noyon, and ascribe them to the reformer. They tell their readers gravely that he was driven from his native town for misconduct, after having been condemned to be scourged and even branded. In spite of all the pains taken by the Dean of Noyon to add a Chapter for fear one should be taken for the other, the catholic for the heretic, the apologists of Rome fail not to ascribe to the reformer the debaucheries of his namesake. What engrossed the thoughts of the canon of Noyon was the glory of John Calvin who died a good catholic, and he feared lest Calvin's heresy should be laid to him. And, accordingly, he clearly assigns incontinence to the one, and heresy to the other. There have indeed been equivocations, as he says, but in a contrary direction. Let us now return to Calvin at Paris.

A new world opened before the young man in the metropolis of letters. He profited by it, applied to his studies, and made great progress in Latin literature. He became familiar with Cicero, and learned from this great master to employ the language of the Romans with a facility, purity, and ease that excite the admiration even of his enemies. But at the same time, he found riches in this language which he afterwards transferred to his own.

Up to this time Latin had been the only language of the learned; and to our own days it has remained the language of the Roman Church. The Reformation created or at least emancipated the vulgar tongue. The exclusive office of the priest had ceased; the people were called to learn and know for themselves. In this one fact was involved the ruin of the language of the priest, and the inauguration of the language of the people. It is no longer to the Sorbonne alone, to a few monks, or ecclesiastics, or literary men, that the new ideas are to be addressed; but to the noble, the citizen, and the labourer. All men are now to be preached to; nay more, all are to become preachers—wool-combers and knights, as well as doctors and parish-priests. A new language is wanted, or at the least the language of the people must undergo an immense transformation, a great enfranchisement, and, drawn from the common uses of life, must receive its patent of nobility from renovated Christianity. The

Gospel, so long slumbering, has awoke; it speaks and addresses whole nations, everywhere kindling generous affections; it opens the treasures of heaven to a generation that was thinking only of the mean things on earth; it shakes the masses; it talks to them of God, of man, of good and evil, of the pope and the Bible, of a crown in heaven, and perhaps a scaffold upon earth. The popular tongue, which hitherto had been the language of chroniclers and troubadours only, was called by the Reformation to act a new part, and consequently to new developments. A new world is opening upon society, and for a new world there must be new languages. [493]

The Reformation removed the French from the swaddling bands in which it had hitherto been bound, and reared it to its majority. From that time the language has had full possession of those exalted privileges that belong to the operations of the mind and the treasures of heaven, of which it had been deprived under the guardianship of Rome. No doubt the language is formed by the people themselves: they invent those happy words, those energetic and figurative expressions, that impart to language such colouring and life. But there are resources beyond their reach, and which can only proceed from men of intellect. Calvin, when called upon to discuss and to prove, enriched his mother-tongue with modes of connection and dependence, with shadows, transitions, and dialectic forms, that it did not as yet possess.

These elements were already beginning to ferment in the head of the young student at the college of La Marche. This lad, who was destined to exercise so powerful a mastery over the human heart, was also to subjugate the language he would have to use as his weapon. Protestant France subsequently habituated itself to the French of Calvin, and Protestant France comprehends the most cultivated portion of the nation; from it issued those families of scholars and dignified magistrates who exerted so powerful an influence over the refinement of the people; out of it sprung the Port Royal, one of the greatest instruments that have ever contributed to form the prose and even the poetry of France, and who, after endeavouring to transfer to the Gallican Catholicism the doctrine and language of the Reformation, failed in one of his projects, but succeeded in the other; for Roman-catholic France was forced to go and learn of her Jansenist and reformed adversaries how to wield those weapons of language without which it cannot contend against them.

While the future reformer of religion and language was thus growing to maturity in the college of La Marche, everything was in commotion around the young and serious scholar, who took no part as yet in the great movements that were agitating society. The flames that consumed the hermit and Pavanne had spread terror

through Paris. But the persecutors were not satisfied; a system of terror was set on foot throughout France. The friends of the Reformation no longer dared correspond with one another, for fear their intercepted letters should betray to the vengeance of the tribunals both those who wrote them and those to whom they were addressed.

One man, however, ventured to carry intelligence from Paris to France to the refugees at Basle, by sewing a letter that bore no signature under his doublet. He escaped the squadrons of arquebusiers, the marechaussee of the several districts, the examinations of the provosts and lieutenants, and reached Basle without the mysterious doublet being searched. His tidings filled Toussaint and his friends with alarm. "It is frightful," said Toussaint, "to hear of the great cruelties there inflicted!" Shortly before this, two Franciscan monks had arrived at Basle, closely pursued by the officers of justice. One of them named John Prevost had preached at Meaux, and had afterwards been thrown into prison at Paris. All that they told of Paris and Lyons, through which they had passed, excited the compassion of these refugees. "May our Lord send his grace thither," wrote Toussaint to Farel; "I assure you that I am sometimes in great anxiety and tribulation."

These excellent men still kept up their courage; in vain were all the parliaments on the watch; in vain did the spies of the Sorbonne and of the monks creep into churches, colleges, and even private families, to catch up any word of evangelical doctrine that might there be uttered; in vain did the king's soldiers arrest on the highways everything that seemed to bear the stamp of the Reformation: those Frenchmen whom Rome and her satellites were hunting down and treading under foot, had faith in better days to come, and already perceived afar off the end of this Babylonish captivity, as they called it. "The seventieth year, the year of deliverance, will come at last," said they, "and liberty of spirit and of conscience will be given to us." But the seventy years were destined to last nearly three centuries, and it was only after calamities without a parallel that these hopes were to be realised. It was not in man, however, that the refugees placed any hope. "Those who have begun the dance," said Toussaint, "will not stop on the road." But they believed that the Lord "knew those whom he had chosen, and would deliver his people with a mighty hand."

The Chevalier d'Esch had in effect been delivered. Escaping from the prison at Pont a Mousson, he had hastened to Strasburg; but he did not remain there long. "For the honour of God," immediately wrote Toussaint to Farel, "endeavour to prevail on the knight, our worthy master, to return as speedily as possible; for our brethren have great need of such a leader?" In truth, the French refugees [494] had new cause of alarm. They trembled lest that dispute about the Lord's Supper, which had so much distressed them in Germany, should pass the Rhine, and cause fresh troubles in

France. Francis Lambert, the monk of Avignon, after visiting Zurich and Wittenberg, had been in Metz; but they did not place entire confidence in him; they feared lest he should have imbibed Luther's sentiments, and that by controversies, both useless and "monstrous" (as Toussaint calls them), he might check the progress of the Reformation. Esch therefore returned to Lorraine; but it was to be again exposed to great dangers, "along with all those who were seeking the glory of Jesus Christ."

Yet Toussaint was not of a disposition to send others to the battle without joining in it himself. Deprived of his daily intercourse with Oecolampadius, reduced to associate with an ignorant priest, he had sought communion with Christ, and felt his courage augmented. If he could not return to Metz, might he not at least go to Paris? True, the piles of Pavanne and the hermit of Livry were smoking still, and seemed to repel from the capital all those who held the same faith as they did. But if the colleges and the streets of Paris were struck with terror, so that no one dared even name the Gospel and the Reformation, was not that a reason why he should go thither? Toussaint quitted Basle, and entered those walls where fanaticism had taken the place of riot and debauchery. While advancing in christian studies, he endeavoured to form a connection with those brethren who were in the colleges, and especially in that of the Cardinal Lemoine, where Lefevre and Farel had taught. But he could not long do so freely. The tyranny of the parliamentary commissioners and of the theologians reigned supreme in the capital, and whoever displeased them was accused of heresy. A duke and an abbot, whose names are unknown to us, denounced Toussaint as a heretic; and one day the king's sergeants arrested the youth from Lorraine and put him in prison. Separated from all his friends, and treated like a criminal, Toussaint felt his wretchedness the more keenly.

"O Lord," exclaimed he, "withdraw not thou thy Spirit from me! for without it I am but flesh and a sink of iniquity." While his body was in chains, he turned in heart to those who were still combating freely for the Gospel. There was Oecolampadius, his father, and "whose work I am in the Lord," said he. There was Leclerc, whom he no doubt believed, on account of his age, "unable to bear the weight of the Gospel;" Vaugris, who had displayed all the zeal "of the most affectionate brother" to rescue him from the hands of his enemies; Roussel, "by whom he hoped the Lord would bring great things to pass; and lastly, Farel, to whom he wrote, "I commend myself to your prayers, for fear that I should fall in this warfare." How must the names of all these men have softened the bitterness of his imprisonment, for he showed no signs of falling. Death, it is true, seemed hanging over him in this city where the blood of a number of his brethren was to be poured out like water; the friends of his mother, of his uncle the Dean of Metz, and the Cardinal of Lorraine, made him the most lavish offers "I despise them," answered he; "I know that they are a temptation of the devil.

I would rather suffer hunger, I would rather be a slave in the house of the Lord, than dwell with riches in the palaces of the wicked." At the same time he made a bold confession of his faith. "It is my glory," exclaimed he, "to be called a heretic by those whose lives and doctrines are opposed to Jesus Christ." And this interesting and bold young man subscribed his letters, "Peter Toussaint, unworthy to be called a Christian."

Thus, in the absence of the king, new blows were continually aimed against the Reformation. Berquin, Toussaint, and many others, were in prison; Schuch, Pavanne, and the hermit of Livry, had been put to death; Farel, Lefevre, Roussel, and many other defenders of the holy doctrine, were in exile, the mouths of the mighty ones were dumb. The light of the Gospel day was growing dim; the storm was roaring incessantly, bending and shaking as if it would uproot the young tree that the hand of God had so recently planted in France.

Nor was this all. The humble victims who had already fallen were to be succeeded by more illustrious martyrs. The enemies of the Reform in France, having failed when they began with persons of rank, had submitted to begin at the bottom, but with the hope of rising gradually until they procured the condemnation and death of the most exalted personages. The inverse progress succeeded with them. Scarcely had the ashes with which the persecution had covered the Greve and the avenues of Notre-Dame been dispersed by the wind, before fresh attacks were commenced. Messire Anthony [495] Du Blet, that excellent man, the Lyons merchant, sunk under the persecutions of these enemies of the truth, in company with another disciple, Francis Moulin, of whose fate no details have been handed down. They went further still; they now took a higher aim; there was an illustrious person whom they could not reach, but whom they could strike in those who were dear to her. This was the Duchess of Alencon. Michael d'Arande, chaplain to the king's sister, for whose sake Margaret had dismissed her other preachers, and who proclaimed the pure doctrine of the Gospel in her presence, became the object of attack, and was threatened with imprisonment and death. About the same time Anthony Papillon, for whom the princess had obtained the office of chief master of requests to the Dauphin, died suddenly, and the general report, even among the enemies, was that he had been poisoned.

Thus the persecution spread over the kingdom, and daily drew nearer to the person of Margaret. After the forces of the Reform, concentrated at Meaux, at Lyons, and at Basle, had been dispersed, they brought down one after another those isolated combatants who here and there stood up for it. Yet a few more efforts, and the soil of France will be free from heresy. Underhanded contrivances and secret practices took

the place of clamour and the stake. They will make war in open day, but they will also carry in on in darkness. If fanaticism employs the tribunal and the scaffold for the meaner sort, poison and the dagger are in reserve for the great. The doctors of a celebrated society have made too good a use of these means, and even kings have fallen under the dagger of the assassins. But justice demands that we should remember it. Rome has had in every age its fanatical assassins, it has also had men like Vincent de Paul and Fenelon. These blows struck in darkness and silence were well adapted to spread terror on every side.

To this perfidious policy and fanatical persecution from within, were added the fatal reverses from without. A veil of mourning hung over the whole nation. There was not a family, particularly among the nobles, whose tears did not flow for the loss of a father, a husband, of a son left on the fields of Italy, or whose hearts did not tremble for the liberty and even the life of one of its members. The great reverses that had fallen upon the nation diffused a leaven of hatred against the heretics. People and parliament, church and throne, joined hand in hand.

Was it not enough for the Duchess of Alencon that the defeat of Pavia should have deprived her of a husband, and made her brother a prisoner? Must the torch of the Gospel, in whose mild light she so rejoiced, be extinguished perhaps for ever? In May 1525, she had felt increase of sorrow. Charles of Lannoy had received orders to take his prisoner into Spain. Margaret had recourse to the consolations of faith, and having found them, immediately communicated them to her brother.

"My lord," she wrote, "the farther you are removed from us, the stronger is my hope of your deliverance: for when the reason of man is troubled and fails, then the Lord performs his mighty works.—And now, if he makes you partaker of the pains he has borne for you, I beseech you, my lord, to believe that it is only to try how much you love him, and to afford you space to learn how he loves you; for he will have your whole heart, as he through love hath given his own. After having united you to himself by tribulation, he will deliver you to his glory and your consolation, by the merits of his victorious resurrection, in order that by you his name may be known and sanctified, not only in your kingdom, but in all Christendom, until the conversion of the unbelievers. Oh! how blessed will be your brief captivity, by which God will deliver so many souls from unbelief and eternal condemnation!" Francis I deceived the hopes of his pious sister.

The news from Spain soon increased the general sorrow. Mortification and illness endangered the life of the haughty Francis. If the king remains a prisoner, if he dies, if his mother's regency is prolonged for many years, will not the Reformation

be crushed for ever? "But when all seems lost," said the young scholar of Noyon at a later period, "God saves his Church in a marvellousway." The Church of France, which was as if in the travail of birth, was to have an interval of ease before her pains returned; and to this end God made use of a weak woman, who never openly declared in favour of the Reformation. At that time she thought more of saving the king and the kingdom, than of delivering obscure Christians, who nevertheless rested great hopes in her. But under the splendour of worldly affairs God often conceals the mysterious ways by which he governs his people. A noble project arose in the mind of the Duchess of Alencon. To cross the sea or the Pyrenees, and rescue Francis from the power of Charles V, was now the object of her life.

Margaret of Valois announced her intention, which was suggested by her mother, and all France hailed it with shouts of gratitude. Her great genius, the reputation she had acquired, the love she [496] felt for her brother, and that of Francis towards her, were a great counterpoise in the eyes of Louisa and Duprat to her attachment to the new doctrine. All eyes were turned upon her, as the only person capable of extricating the kingdom from its perilous position. Let Margaret visit Spain, let her speak to the powerful emperor and to his ministers, and let her employ that admirable genius which Providence has bestowed on her, for the deliverance of her brother and her king!

Yet very different sentiments filled the hearts of the nobles and of the people, as they saw the Duchess of Alencon going into the midst of the enemy's councils, and among the fierce soldiery of the catholic king.

All admired the courage and devotion of this young woman, but did not share it. The friends of the princess had fears on her behalf, which were but too near being realised. The evangelical Christians were full of hope. The captivity of Francis I had brought unheard-of severities on the friends of the Reform; his liberation, they thought, might bring them to an end. To open the gates of Spain to the king, would be to close those of the prisons into which the servants of the Word of God had been thrown. Margaret encouraged herself in a project towards which all her soul felt attracted by so many different motives. Heaven's height cannot my passage stay, Nor powers of hell can bar my way, My Saviour holds the keys of both. Her woman's heart was strengthened by that faith which overcomes the world, and her resolution was irrevocable. Every preparation was made for this important and dangerous journey.

The Archbishop of Embrun, afterwards Cardinal of Tournon, and the president Selves, were already at Madrid, treating for the king's deliverance. They were placed under Margaret's orders, as was also the Bishop of Tarbes, afterwards Cardinal of

Grammont; full powers being given to the princess alone. At the same time Montmorency, afterwards so hostile to the Reform, was sent in all haste to Spain to procure a safe-conduct for the king's sister. The emperor objected at first, and said that it was the duty of his ministers alone to arrange this affair. "One hour's conference," exclaimed Selves, "between your majesty, the king my master, and the Duchess of Alencon, would forward the treaty more than a month's discussion between diplomatists."

Margaret, impatient to arrive in consequence of the king's illness, set off without a safe-conduct, accompanied by a splendid train. She quitted the court, moving towards the Mediterranean; but while she was on the road, Montmorency returned with letters from Charles guaranteeing her liberty for three months only. That matters not; she will not be stopped. The eagerness for this journey was such that the Duchess had been compelled to ask the king whom she should select to accompany her. "Your good servants have so great a desire to see you, that each one prays to be allowed to go with me," she wrote to her brother.

Margaret had scarcely reached the shores of the Mediterranean when the fears of those about her on the insufficiency of the safeconduct, but especially the bad weather and the tempest, made her halt. "The seamen themselves (wrote she to Montmorency) are alarmed." On the 27th August she made up her mind. "The bearer," she wrote to the king on the very day, "the bearer will tell you how the heavens, the sea, and the opinions of men have retarded my departure. But He alone to whom all things pay obedience, hath given such favourable weather that every difficulty is solved I will not delay either on account of my own security or of the sea, which is unsettled at this season, to hasten towards the place where I may see you; for fear of death, imprisonment, and every sort of evil are now so habitual to me, that I hold lightly my life, health, glory, and honour, thinking by this means to share your fortune, which I would desire to bear alone." Nothing therefore could detain this princess at Aigues-Mortes, and in this port Margaret embarked on board the ship prepared for her. Led by Providence into Spain, rather for the deliverance of humble and oppressed Christians, than to free the mighty King of France from his captivity, she confided herself to the waves of that sea which had borne her brother a captive after the disastrous battle of Pavia.

END OF VOLUME 3